

**South-South Cooperation and International Norm
Change: Brazil and Venezuela's Development
Assistance Programmes, 2005–2016**

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I, Bethany Tasker, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This research explores the creation and dissemination of the South-South cooperation (SSC) norm regime as an alternative to the Northern-led cooperation model of the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Using Finnemore and Sikkink's theory of the norm life cycle, it tracks SSC from its origins at Bandung in 1955 to its "tipping point" in 2009, as demonstrated in the Nairobi Resolution that solidified the SSC principles of respect for sovereignty, partnership, solidarity and mutual benefit. The aim of this research is to determine how the SSC norm regime was perceived in the South over the period 2005–2016. The focus is on the Latin American and Caribbean context, with Brazil and Venezuela identified as the two major actors in the region that emerged as SSC norm leaders during this time. Both countries used the tools of persuasion and demonstration to portray the value of SSC and promote the core SSC principles; however, they differed greatly in approach. These similarities and differences are explored via the case studies of two small Eastern Caribbean nations, St Lucia and Grenada. Using extensive interview data and programme information, the research examines how government officials and stakeholders in these two states, and throughout the region, perceived Brazil and Venezuela's programmes and the SSC norm regime in general over this time period, and attempts to determine whether the regime gained traction in the South and to what extent.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE 21ST CENTURY SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION NORM REGIME

Since the turn of the 21st century, South-South cooperation (SSC) has shifted from a set of noble and evocative ideas on the virtues of Southern solidarity to an established form of development assistance practised by some of the largest and most prominent Southern nations. In doing so, it has attracted the interest of Northern donors, multilateral organisations and Southern recipients, which have sought to understand this phenomenon and its implications for their own agency and structures. Academics and researchers have entered these debates by examining the functioning and impact of SSC in order to grow the knowledge base and add further understanding to the changes this alternative framework is bringing to the development field and to global relations as a whole. This thesis seeks to be a part of this literature by focusing on an aspect of SSC that has largely been ignored to this point – the perspective and response of Southern recipients to this renewed form of SSC and the projection of meaning and value on its rhetoric and practice.

Taking a constructivist approach, I argue that SSC can be classified as a norm regime made up of four overarching principles – solidarity, partnership, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. By placing this norm regime on Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) norm life cycle, I examine how Southern donors attempted to persuade Southern recipients to follow and adopt SSC via rhetorical devices and demonstration. The study is placed within the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) context during the period 2005–2016, with Brazil and Venezuela identified as two SSC norm leaders and St Lucia and Grenada as two potential norm followers. Using qualitative interview data, this research explores how Southern stakeholders perceived SSC activities both from afar and at the implementation level to determine how SSC was understood and imbued with meaning by the South.

The 21st century renewal of South-South Cooperation

While the prevalence and discussion of SSC has increased significantly over the past 15 years, it has existed as a concept since the mid-20th century. In its simplest form, the term refers to any type of assistance and/or cooperation, whether financial or technical, between two countries that are considered to be of the Global South

(Mawdsley 2012b). Its origins date back to the 1955 Bandung Conference when it was first expressed as a goal of the South in order to achieve greater self-reliance; this was further reaffirmed in similar Southern movements –the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961, the G77 and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964, as well as the New International Economic Order in 1974 – although the UN identifies the beginnings of SSC to be rooted in the UNCTAD Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries held in Buenos Aires in 1978 (UN 2009).¹ While the idea of SSC was enthusiastically presented and supported in these conferences and movements, the practical implementation was limited. There were examples of SSC occurring over this time – China has provided assistance to Africa since the 1950s (Quadir 2013; Gosovic 2016) and the USSR assisted Soviet satellite states during the Cold War (Dreher et al 2013); however, these forms of assistance were usually *ad hoc*, small and went relatively unnoticed by Northern donors, and as such were not viewed as a viable alternative to the existing aid regime. Since the early 2000s, however, SSC has begun to draw attention from the North, the South, and the multilateral development organisations, as well as academics and researchers who are seeking to understand these changes, and as such over the past decade the literature on SSC has grown substantially.

Before discussing the renewed impetus and growth of South-South cooperation since the new millennium, it must first be established what constitutes SSC and which countries are considered to be the donors of interest in this category. The broadest category are “non-DAC donors” – that is, countries that provide funds, concessional loans and technical assistance to other countries but that are not members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).² Of these donors, Walz and Ramachandran (2011) have identified three groups: the DAC model (those countries that share DAC principles and seek membership of this group, e.g. Turkey and Mexico); the Arab model (this group consists of some of the oldest and most generous donors, however aid is usually restricted to Arab and/or Muslim recipients, e.g. Saudi Arabia); and the Southern model (donors with little interest in joining the DAC or adhering to its principles, e.g. China, India, Brazil and

¹ The UN reports that discuss SSC use this as the benchmark from which to measure its success, see e.g. UN General Assembly 2009.

² This is a large group as the DAC consists only of 29 member countries, all from the Global North (a number of European nations plus the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan; South Korea joined in 2010 and might be classified as newly Northern) (Walshe Rousell 2013).

Venezuela). It is this final group of donors that are the point of interest of this thesis; for ease they are herein referred to as “Southern donors”.

I argue that Southern donors ascribe to a set of principles that define the relationship between the nations participating in a SSC exchange, namely solidarity, horizontality, non-interference in domestic affairs (respect for sovereignty), and mutual benefit. At the core of these principles is the concept of genuine partnership that is grounded on the shared experience and solidarity of being fellow “developing countries” – for this reason, Southern donors generally discourage any use of the terms “aid” or “charity”, and are also reluctant to be referred to as “donors” (Mawdsley 2012a).³ These principles set Southern donors apart from and in opposition to the DAC model of foreign aid as they lead to forms of assistance that the DAC does not condone. For example, the principle of non-interference tends to translate into unconditional cooperation – that is, the recipient is provided with assistance or funds without being required to adhere to a set of policy conditions as laid out by the donor. The DAC does not support unconditional aid, as it believes it can foster corruption and can implicitly allow human rights abuses; however, it has been questioned how effective conditionality has been in addressing these issues (Woods 2008; Dreher et al 2013). Likewise, the principle of mutual benefit can result in the use of tied aid – that is, the donor may stipulate that donor-country resources and workers be used instead of local resources or opening up the project to a third party. The DAC disallows tied aid because it is seen as benefitting the donor more than the recipient, which is a valid concern when the cost of Northern-donor services is considerably more expensive than local services (Clay et al 2009); however, Southern donor services can sometimes be the most cost-effective and efficient option and as such the use of tied aid is not viewed as problematic in regard to SSC (ECOSOC 2008). Perhaps the biggest distinction between Southern donors and DAC donors is that they are reluctant/unwilling to become members of the DAC or to adhere to its rules. This reticence may stem from ideological problems with the DAC structure – it can be viewed as undemocratic and unrepresentative of all parties (it does not include recipient countries as members), and as such it perpetuates an asymmetric model of global structures, as Esteves and Assunção (2014, 1780) have stated: “The tension between the revision of the

³ While it is acknowledged that the use of the term “donors” is problematic as a label for these countries, it is used in this thesis as a means to identify which country is the primary giver in the cooperative transactions.

international order and adaptation to a hegemonic model of development is perhaps the distinguishing feature of SSC in the twenty-first century.”

The growth of SSC since 2000 has been strongly connected to the rise of the so-called “emerging powers”, and particularly to a group of nations that were named by Goldman Sachs in 2003 as four economies that “could become a much larger force in the world economy” by 2050 – Brazil, Russia, India and China (South Africa was added to this list in 2010, completing the acronym of BRICS) (Wilson and Purushothaman 2003, 1; Malamud 2011). As these countries have grown significantly in economic wealth, they have become more involved in SSC, and due to the increasing size of these contributions have begun to impact upon the development field as a whole. The data on the absolute and relative size of SSC activities is largely based on estimates due to the lack of monitoring and reporting of development assistance by Southern donors and also reluctance to make these numbers available. Further, there is no one universal definition of SSC and as such it can vary from state to state (eg whether foreign direct investment should be included). However, the widely-cited 2008 ECOSOC report estimated SSC to amount to 10% of all global aid at that time, and the 2014 UN report on the *State of South-South Cooperation* estimated the value of SSC in 2011 to be between \$16.1 billion and \$19 billion (UN 2014) – although both of these numbers are estimates, they give some indication of the scale of SSC during this period. China is the main contributor of SSC, followed by India; indeed the UN places these two nations “in a category of their own because of the scale and diversity of the South-South cooperation agendas” (UN 2009, 9). Brazil and Venezuela have emerged as the two major players in the Latin American region, and South Africa has achieved that status on the African continent. Despite their commitment to the principles of SSC listed above, de Renzio and Seifert (2014, 1861) have stressed that “SSC actors are very diverse in just about all other aspects of development cooperation, from strategic priorities to regional and sectoral focus to institutional arrangements”. Due to these differences, Southern donors cannot be considered a unified group and there is little expectation that they will form an organisation of their own that mirrors the DAC and its central regulations.

As mentioned above, the literature available on SSC is growing rapidly as these new donors expand their services to the South and their offerings increase in value, and thereby impact on the workings of Northern donors and their institutions. Much of this literature is descriptive in function, as researchers seek to understand this new type of development cooperation and analyse its workings. In this regard, reports

produced by international organisations have acted as the foundation of much of the early knowledge of SSC. These include: the comprehensive ECOSOC report produced in 2008; the 2010 Reality of Aid Management Committee report; SEGIB's *Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2013-2014* (Xalma 2014);⁴ as well as the UN reports on SSC that have been produced every two years since 1995 and then every year since 2011.⁵

The academic literature on this latest era of SSC, while also largely descriptive, usually takes either a positive/hopeful or critical stance on its role in the development field. The positive literature has focused on the benefits of alternative donors entering the development market and therefore providing a more competitive industry, as well its role in exposing some of the problems with the traditional provision of aid and pointing towards methods for reform (see Woods 2008; Walz and Ramachandran 2011; Zimmerman and Smith 2011; Rowlands 2012; Burges 2013a; Dreher et al 2013; Gosovic 2016; Muhr 2016; Milhorange and Soule-Kohndou 2017). In contrast, the critical literature has focused on the lack of accountability and potential for abuse that these new players bring to the development table, and therefore the authors have presented it as a threat to the proper functioning of traditional aid (see Dreher et al 2011; Quadir 2013).⁶ A subset of SSC literature has focused exclusively on China and the aspects and impact of its aid programmes to Africa, Asia and Latin America; due to both the breadth and depth of China's development cooperation, as well as its domestic political economic policies, it has been frequently viewed with suspicion and its fervour for SSC has been depicted as part of its resource-hungry foreign policy (see Brautigam 2011; Dehart 2012; Ríos 2013; Mendes 2013; Harris and Arias 2016; Nayyar 2016).

A further body of literature has focused on the role of the emerging powers in the international order, the global economy and the development system. Narlikar (2010) studied the level of conformity each of these new powers have shown to the existing international regime. Nel (2010) and Vieira (2012) focused on the desire of

⁴ This report does not include Venezuela as a donor, but only as a recipient, and seems to ignore most ALBA-related cooperation activities.

⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Secretary-General on the State of South-South Cooperation* (1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

⁶ One of the most vocal voices on the negative side of this debate is Moises Naim and his categorisation of some Southern donors as deliverers of "rogue aid", specifically China, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela: see Naim 2009. While this language is incendiary and therefore quickly acquired a place in the lexicon of SSC, little of the academic literature is as openly critical of donors from the South.

these new powers to gain recognition and redistribution in the global sphere and how they are seeking reform of international organisations. However, Gray and Gills (2016) described how divergent interests amongst the emerging powers had impeded this goal, while Mittelman (2016) showed how even small gains made have not altered US dominance in these institutions, and Weinlich (2014) found that these countries showed little aspiration to lead these organisations in any real sense (it was noted, however, that Brazil had been the most eager to participate). Pieterse (2011) looked at the role of the new powers in establishing a “multipolar world” and claimed they could act as a “rebalancing” force to the hegemony of the US; Hurrell (2006, 2007b) likewise claimed that emerging powers have used a process of “soft balancing” with which to counteract US power. These discussions highlight the functioning of development assistance as a tool of “soft power” – that is, it is a means to gain influence, to form alliances and build up goodwill in the international sphere and therefore it helps to allow these emerging nations to gain the power they seek without needing to invest in the “hard power” tools of military and economic strength (Nye 2004; Bry 2015).

In this vein, perhaps the largest body of literature has revolved around the impact SSC has had on the traditional development regime and how Northern bodies, particularly the DAC, have so far responded to these new donors and the challenges they present. Some of these authors have been cautiously optimistic in regards to the changes the Southern donors are bringing to the “DAC club” and have argued that development structures are in need of long-overdue reform (see Milani and Echart Muñoz 2013; Esteves and Assunção 2014). However, others have argued that SSC is too small and lacking in organisation to have any real impact on established systems, and it is only a matter of time before these outliers are brought into the DAC fold (see Kim and Lightfoot 2011; Bräutigam 2011; Quadir 2013). There has also been focus on how the DAC and traditional donors might involve themselves in the SSC agenda, with options including a role in assisting with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (see Chandy and Kharas 2011; de Renzio and Seifert 2014; Dreher et al 2013), creating more space for dialogue between old and new donors (see Abdenur and da Fonseca 2013; Abdenur 2014; Mawdsley et al 2014), and placing a stronger emphasis on triangular cooperation⁷ (see Chandy and

⁷ Triangular cooperation involves a three-way transaction of a Southern donor, a Northern donor and a Southern recipient. In this way a Northern country is able to be involved in SSC; however, some Southern donors are more eager than others to embrace this type of cooperation, e.g. Brazil and South Africa have been more amenable, although Brazil prefers multilateral partners rather than Northern donor states.

Kharas 2011; Burges 2013a; Abdenur and da Fonseca 2013; Abdenur 2014). Cabral et al (2014) showed how the DAC model is not compatible with SSC and as such cannot accommodate its differences. The authors found that the differing motivations and principles of SSC (particularly those of sovereignty and mutual exchange) as well as the practical limitations Southern donors face in adhering to the level of monitoring and assessment demanded by the DAC means judging SSC activities by DAC guidelines is inherently problematic and will reflect poorly on Southern donors. Hence, some authors have concluded that the DAC is not the appropriate forum for SSC to be discussed or in which Southern donors should coordinate; alternatives have been suggested, including the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), ECOSOC, UNCTAD or existing SSC multilateral groups (eg BRICS and IBSA (ie India/Brazil/South Africa)) (see Walz and Ramachandran 2011; Esteves and Assunção 2014; de Renzio and Seifert 2014; Gosovic 2016).

While suggestions have been made in this literature for how the Southern donors may be integrated into the mainstream development agenda, there has been recognition that the Southern donors considered to be the most non-conformist (eg China, India, Brazil and Venezuela) are usually dubious of or even hostile to Northern involvement in SSC and have little or no desire to “fit in” amongst these traditional donors. Woods has called this a “silent revolution”:

“... because emerging donors are not overtly attempting to overturn rules or replace them. Rather, by quietly offering alternatives to aid-receiving countries, they are introducing competitive pressures into the existing system.” (Woods 2008, 1221)

As such, despite the DAC’s attempts to draw in Southern donors and create space for SSC, the biggest impediment to this occurring is the reluctance of these donors to fall in line. Instead, they have favoured the establishment of their own principles, which do not align with DAC rules but may exist alongside it – or as I argue, an alternative but complementary norm regime.

Most of the International Relations literature on SSC could be considered to have taken a realist or neo-realist approach in order to explain the motivations of Southern donors – that is, the focus has been on the international power struggles that define much foreign policy, of which development assistance is just one of the many tools used by nation states to gain influence in external areas and promote their own interests. In this way, SSC has been seen not to differ greatly to traditional aid, as Burges stated:

“Although there are elements of altruistic ‘Southern solidarity’ in the rising flows of development assistance from the new development actors to low-income countries, the dominant prerogatives are economic and national security in nature.” (Burges 2012, 243)

However, there has been some discussion on the role that the rhetoric and presented ideology of SSC is playing in constructing a different type of development cooperation. Authors including Mawdsley (2012a, 2012b),⁸ Milani and Echart Muñoz (2013) and Six (2009) have discussed the history of traditional aid and the feelings of division and resentment it has fostered in the Global South; SSC and its emphasis on partnership and solidarity is therefore seen by some as an alternative and a possible remedy to this history. It is within this literature that takes a more constructivist approach to the study of SSC that this research is located. In this view, SSC has been constructed using a distinct set of principles to justify the use and describe the benefits of SSC – that is, solidarity, partnership, mutual gain, and respect for sovereignty. Hence Mawdsley (2012b, 162) has asserted that just as Northern aid has a strong and deep connection to charity and morality, “the discursive construction of Southern development assistance as being based on solidarity and mutual respect has a genuine and meaningful hold on Southern imaginaries”. This rhetoric is designed to set SSC apart from traditional Northern-led cooperation and create a new set of norms that should drive how Southern countries cooperate with one another.

Further, while there has been much discussion on how SSC has begun to impact on the Northern-led cooperation regime, there has been less consideration on how Southern recipients have responded to SSC. The exception to this is Bry (2015, 2017), who has focused on the perspective of Southern stakeholders. In particular, Bry (2015, 454) looked at Brazil’s use of SSC as a tool of soft power via three biofuel case studies in Latin America, concluding that recipients “favoured the style rather than the content” – thus underlining the importance of SSC rhetoric and principles in creating goodwill even where the actions may not be consistent. I attempt to further fill this gap by providing data and conclusions on the perspective and responses of Southern recipients to SSC, as well as their understanding of the principles that make up the SSC norm regime.

⁸ Mawdsley’s book, *From Recipients to Donors: Emerging Powers and the Changing Development Landscape*, is perhaps the most comprehensive and in-depth study of emerging donors to date. Her exploration of SSC looks at the history, practices and institutions of non-DAC donors, as well as the role that discourse plays in shaping the ideology of traditional aid and SSC.

Theoretical framework: Constructivism and international norm change

This study employs a constructivist approach and the theoretical research framework of international norm change to examine and explain the expansion of SSC during the early 21st century. Constructivism's focus on the role of ideas and knowledge in constructing social reality (Adler 2002) is an apt method for studying SSC due to the resource limitations experienced by the South in the development assistance field – that is, SSC included relatively limited action for the vast majority of its history. Until the rapid economic development of the “emerging powers” during the 2000s, the South had relatively little influence and control over how development assistance was delivered; using the leverage of much-needed financial assistance, the Northern donors had the power to dictate how funds were to be used and what conditions were included. While these circumstances reflected material truths (ie the North held objectively greater economic and resource power than the South), this dynamic was also the product of established norms of how North-South development cooperation *should* function.

However, these norms and ideas that have underpinned development relations for decades are not natural or given – they have been constructed over time (Fearon and Wendt 2002). Norms have the power to influence the decision-making behaviour of individuals by shaping how they understand the world around them and what they ought to do in a given situation: “[P]eople do one thing and not another due to the presence of certain ‘social constructs’: ideas, beliefs, norms, identities, or some other interpretive filter through which people perceive the world” (Parsons 2010, 80). Hence, constructivism is a holistic theory; it focuses on collective ideas rather than “individual materialism” (Fearon and Wendt 2002; Ruggie 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). This is based on the belief that material aspects only acquire meaning through embedded shared knowledge; social facts depend on human consciousness and language for their existence (Adler 2002). It is important to note that these constructed and collectively held beliefs, while normative in that they entail a sense of “oughtness”, do not imply moral goodness – as Wendt (1999) states, they are ideas not ideals.

This focus on collective ideas – or “intersubjective” knowledge (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, 392) – as expressed in the behaviour of states is at the centre of the constructivist study of international relations. Adler (1997) claims that international relations are merely a series of social facts created via a process of human

agreement. Wendt (1999) asserts that international politics is inherently anarchical, and therefore that the rules and identities found within the international realm are socially constructed to control this. That said, despite the important role of norms in dictating international behaviour, it seems likely that material concerns will usually trump a sense of appropriateness (Krasner 2009). The interplay of these influences is therefore what constructivism can seek to explain: “Material factors matter at the limit, but *how* they matter depends on ideas” (Fearon and Wendt 2002, 58).

The emphasis placed on the role and objectivity of social facts varies amongst constructivists. As such, this study adheres to the tenet of modernist constructivism as embodied by Adler, Finnemore, Ruggie and Wendt, amongst others. This variation asserts that, while the world is made up of socially constructed ideas, there are processes of cause and effect that can be studied and are therefore “knowable” (Adler 2002; Fearon and Wendt 2002; Parsons 2010). This leads to the presence of facts or truth; while there may be a number of explanations and constructed ideas, not all are equal – some will be more logical or persuasive and so hold more weight (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). Wendt (1999) calls this “thin constructivism” as it holds space for material aspects to be understood. This is in contrast to “thick” or postmodern constructivism, as supported by Derrida and Foucault, that states it is difficult if not impossible to know anything as there is no objective truth (Adler 2002; Fearon and Wendt 2002).

While this research examines the role of discourse and rhetoric in shaping international norms, it is grounded on the belief that socially constructed ideas can be understood and explained. This study also leaves space for realist ideas to interplay with the constructed, thereby adopting elements of what Barkin (2003) has termed “realist constructivism”. Barkin suggests the use of a constructivist methodology alongside realist theory that takes ideas and norms into account as behaviour-shaping tools. While this research doesn’t concede a full realist reading of the development assistance sector, it does acknowledge the vital role that material power has played and will continue to play for SSC and the Southern donors that support this alternative set of international norms.

Constructivism focuses not only on how ideas and norms influence decision-making, but also on the process of norm evolution and change in the international sphere (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). It attempts to explain change in recognition of the tension between the structures that create the limits of what is acceptable and the choices available to agents within these confines – it is within the

interaction of these structures and agents that change occurs (Adler 1997; Wendt 1999). Finnemore and Sikkink's theory of norm change, discussed below, examines these aspects by identifying the individuals (agents) and organisations (structures), as well as the events and drivers, that influence and direct change in international relations.

There are many factors that influence how ideas are shaped and constructed; however, three are commonly cited and are of particular relevance to this research – power, identity and language. While power is usually reserved for realist readings of international relations, it is acknowledged in constructivism as a determinant of which norms come to dominate social reality – or rather whose vision wins out over the others:

“In short, the power means not only the resources to impose its own vision to others, but also the authority to determine the shared meanings that make up the identities, interests and practices of states as well as the conditions that give, grant or deny access to ‘goods’ and benefits. Since social reality is a matter of imposing meanings and functions in physical objects not previously having these meanings and functions, the ability to create rules behind the game, to define what constitutes an acceptable game, and to be able to bring other actors to commit themselves to these rules because they are now part of their self-understanding is perhaps the way to more subtle and effective power.” (Adler 1997)

Sandholtz and Stiles (2009) assert that power is therefore most important in forming consensus – any state can create a norm but, without the power to encourage or persuade others to follow, it will never become a true norm. Further, as Adler alludes to above, this form of influence within the international sphere could be viewed as a type of soft power. Working to shift international norms and become norm leaders is therefore a worthwhile pursuit for Southern nations that are still unable to force change through military or economic might. Becoming a norm leader, however, does seem to require a certain level of material power in order to be effective. This can be seen in how SSC, while an idea that has been articulated in the South since the 1950s, did not come into practical prominence until the emerging powers, particularly the BRICS, gained enough economic strength to have an impact on the global sphere. While this power is still limited, the space has been opened for the major Southern donors to influence the norms of international cooperation. Not all nations aspire to be norm leaders, however. For example, in the case of SSC, while China has become the dominant player in Southern development assistance in terms of available resources, it has been reluctant to

lead in this area; Brazil, on the other hand, has sought a greater role in shaping and disseminating SSC norms, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The second influencing factor in norm shaping is that of identity. Wendt (1999) describes this as an actor's self-understanding as well as how that identity is recognised by others; these can shift over time and have different levels of legitimacy as norms and circumstances change. Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) identify two categories of state identities: "type" identities, which are based on defining characteristics (eg democratic, Islamic etc); and role identities, which are based on relational elements (eg friends, rivals etc). States will therefore tend to comply with norms that are followed by others in their categories in an attempt to both confirm their place and to remain within that classification. Adler (1997, 339) states that identities can be more powerful than norms: "Collective understandings, such as norms, are not sufficient cause for action; individual agents must act according to their identities and as their interests dictate." Hence identities, norms and self-interest become so embedded that divergence becomes severely limited. The importance of identity is especially pronounced in the idea of SSC – so much so that the identifier is included in the name – this is cooperation between the "South", for those that identify as "Southern". As explained in the following chapters, this identity embodies aspects of type and social identities – it is both a defining characteristic (in terms of economic and social classifications) and a relational category (how states claiming this identity are expected to relate to one another).

The influence of language and discourse is a central part of constructivist examinations of international relations, albeit to varying degrees. This research focuses on the ability of Southern states to frame a SSC discourse that persuades other Southern states to follow the norm. Gramscian hegemonic power can be detected when a belief is established that there is one universal and authoritative vision that dominates all others – in this case, the dominant view of Northern-led cooperation prevailed throughout the latter half of the 20th century (although with adjustments made over this time), a vision largely supported and promoted by the more powerful Northern nations. The challenge of SSC and the Southern donors has been to frame an alternative vision and persuade others to see it as superior to older ideas. While the Northern powers have had coercive as well as persuasive resources at their disposal (eg much needed financial aid could be withheld if certain conditions weren't met), until recently the Southern donors generally have had mainly persuasive powers in their arsenal; and besides a few examples (eg

China and Venezuela), the 21st century Southern donors are still somewhat limited in their resource capacity. To challenge the Northern development discourse it was therefore necessary to establish a discourse of Southern cooperation that would be viewed as “appropriate” and then as “normal” (Keeley 1990), which would eventually lead to a time where diversion from this norm would be seen not only as inappropriate but inconceivable. As further discussed in Chapter 3, this transition has been sought through language (as well as demonstration), by describing and declaring SSC as something that holds inherent goodness. The appeal to the principles of SSC have played a large role in this –terms such as “solidarity” and “partnership” are fundamentally difficult to dispute as wrong or worthless.

It is important to discuss more fully the specific role of norms in the larger constructivist framework. A norm is “a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891). This definition notably includes space for competing norms within international politics – that is, norms are not always considered universal (although some may be more universal than others) and therefore the following of certain norms can imply being part of a stated and shared identity. In this case, the identity of “South” will be of great import. It is commonly agreed that there are three types of norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Ruggie 1998; Kacowicz 2005; Weiner 2009). The first are constitutive, or fundamental, norms. These are the core norms that define the parameters of the game, they are broad and more vague than the other norms and so there is space for interpretation and contestation – for example, sovereignty. The second type are regulative norms. These are the rules of the game that constrain the behaviour of actors, they also include rights and obligations based on identity. The third type are evaluative or prescriptive norms. These include custom and recurrent behaviour; practices of interaction that are taken for granted or met with disapproval when broken. The norms discussed within this research include aspects of these three types. For example, fundamental norms are appealed to as a form of persuasion, these are then translated into guidelines as seen in SSC policy documents, which hopefully over time become prescriptive norms. While it may appear that some norms are so vague or taken for granted that they are difficult to trace, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) state that norms leave a trail and therefore can be studied. These communications may include legal agreements – for example, treaties, speeches and policy documents, as well as individuals who show commitment to these norms – as studied in this research via interview data.

While norms play a large role in constructivism's explanation of international relations, Krasner asserts that the role of norms shouldn't be overplayed:

"I do not believe that norms are irrelevant in the international system, but an adequate understanding of their impact must recognize that logics of appropriateness (norms and values) and logics of consequences (actions to realize material interests) can be decoupled. Norms may persist... but their impact on actual behaviour is attenuated." (Krasner 2009, 12)

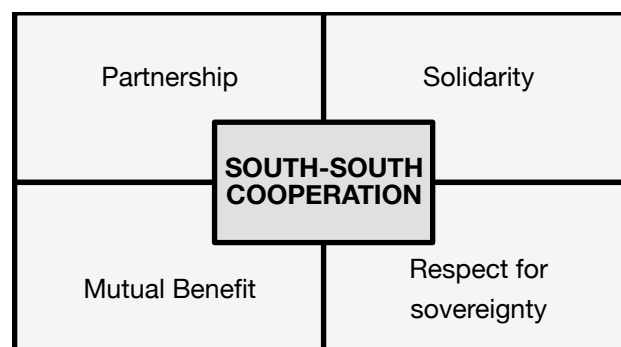
Krasner describes this process of decoupling as "organised hypocrisy" – the norm continues to be perceived as correct even when it is infringed due to material interests taking precedent. Sandholtz (2008) agrees with this, stating that rule breaking doesn't necessarily lead to rule change and, as mentioned above, violations can work to strengthen the norm. Further, rule breaking doesn't imply a norm change is desired; powerful states often infringe norms with no intention of creating change – it was merely in their interest at that point in time to choose the logic of consequence over the logic of appropriateness. This may lead to problems, however, when these same states expect norm following from others. Weiner (2009, 180) also points out that norms are stronger when there is consensus and agreement by all parties rather than a norm being imposed on those who weren't invited to partake in its establishment: "The link between formal validity and social recognition becomes disturbed when contexts of norm-setting and norm-following are decoupled." This situation mirrors the case of Northern-led cooperation where the norm-setting environment of the DAC, for example, does not include any Southern recipients who are expected to be norm followers.

A prominent norm that straddles the line of indisputability and frequent infringement is that of sovereignty. Sovereignty is a relational norm; it only exists within a framework of shared meaning (Ruggie 1998; Sandholtz 2009). It is acknowledged as a central tenet of the nation state system and yet is compromised as a matter of course. Krasner (2009) identifies three levels of sovereignty: legal sovereignty (states must recognise the existence of other states); Westphalian sovereignty (states are acknowledged as autonomous, and should adhere to a policy of non-intervention in other states); and domestic sovereignty (internal independence is respected). Not all states have all three levels of sovereignty – for example, EU member states have legal and domestic sovereignty but not Westphalian. While some sovereignty may be relinquished in a consensual manner, sovereignty can also lead to tension with other established norms – Sandholtz and Stiles (2009) explain how the liberal norm of human rights can clash with the sovereignty norm of non-intervention.

Sovereignty is discussed at length as one of the SSC principles, but it is useful to recognise the contested and flexible nature of this norm from the outset. Of concern here is Westphalian sovereignty, as non-intervention is essentially the meaning of the respect for sovereignty principle, particularly that states should not intervene in internal affairs via such tools as providing or withholding development assistance. How SSC defines sovereignty and what participants perceive to be the importance of this norm are discussed throughout this research.

SSC is about more than sovereignty, however; indeed it is made up of a number of norms – which I have summed up under the headings of respect for sovereignty, partnership, solidarity and mutual benefit – that together might be described as comprising a “norm regime”, as depicted in Figure 1.1. How I identified these four principles and their evolution is discussed in Chapter 3.

Figure 1.1: The South-South cooperation norm regime



Krasner defines a regime as follows:

“Regimes can be defined as sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations. Principles are beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude. Norms are standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action. Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice.” (Krasner 2009, 114)

Hence, SSC can be viewed as a regime of development cooperation that includes core principles and norms that have the potential to lead to accepted guidelines and established decision-making procedures. The term “potential” is used because while Southern donors and partners are clear about SSC’s principles and norms there are fewer examples of concrete guidelines on the subject. This may be due to the limited institutional framework around SSC, as well as a reluctance to dictate rules that restrict room for interpretation and freedom of application. As with norms, through a process of reinforcement and contestation, regimes can be seen as

continually changing. A danger, however, is the possibility of a regime being absorbed by another regime (Keeley 1990). This is a potential pitfall for SSC as its principles and rhetoric have already been somewhat co-opted by the Northern-led cooperation regime, as discussed in Chapter 3. However, as examined throughout this thesis, using SSC rhetoric and language is not enough to establish an accepted norm regime – this must be backed up by action or else it can prove more damaging than not using the language at all.

The notion that norms are always changing is based on the premise that they require constant adaptation and flexibility in order to be applied in a myriad of circumstances:

“[N]orms ... develop in path-dependent, self-reinforcing ways, one mechanism of which is by ubiquity, and naturalness, of normative reasoning itself. Normative systems are inherently expansionary to the extent to which they enable people to reason from one situation to another, by way of analogy.” (Stone Sweet 1999, 157)

Stone Sweet is suggesting here that these changes can be reinforcing – the norms become stronger as they adapt to cover more situations. Weiner (2009), however, asserts that norm erosion is the prevailing force; that the process of norm interpretation leads to norm contestation, which eventually leads to the norm being fundamentally altered and replaced by a new norm. Either way, norms are rarely in stasis and so the question becomes not *whether* norms change but *how* norms change and to what effect. A number of theories have been proposed to explain the phenomenon of norm evolution and change.⁹ However, the model used here as the framework to study the progression of SSC as a regime of international norms is Finnemore and Sikkink’s “life cycle of norms”.

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) use a three stage model to depict how a norm moves from an idea to a fully embedded social standard of behaviour. The first stage – “norm emergence” – involves a process whereby norm entrepreneurs use persuasion to convince a critical mass of states (norm leaders) to embrace a new norm, eventually climaxing in a tipping point. This leads to stage two – “norm cascade” – whereby norm leaders attempt to socialise other states to become norm followers. The final stage – “norm internalisation” – is reached when the norm is

⁹ Sandholtz (2009) stresses the role of disputes and dispute resolution as the drivers of a never-ending cycle of norm change; Florini (1996) uses an evolutionary model, involving processes of norm reproduction and expansion; Adler (1997) depicts a theory of cognitive evolution, selection and institutionalisation, stressing the role of international learning in creating shared knowledge acquired through persuasion and consensus.

firmly embedded in culture and is no longer a subject of debate. This process is depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Stages of norms

	Stage 1 Norm emergence	Stage 2 Norm cascade	Stage 3 Internalisation
Actors	Norm entrepreneurs with organisational platforms	States, international organisations, networks	Law, professions, bureaucracy,
Motives	Altruism, empathy, ideational commitment	Legitimacy, reputation, esteem	Conformity
Dominant mechanisms	Persuasion	Socialisation, institutionalisation, demonstration	Habit, institutionalisation

Source: Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 898.

The norm life cycle of the SSC norm regime

Taking a constructivist standpoint, this research situates the SSC norm regime on Finnemore and Sikkink's model of international norm change and analyses the actors and events that have contributed to its evolution and progression. It does this by focusing on a specific time and place as an indicator of SSC's overall path; hence, the conclusions relate particularly to the frame of observation, although this research should highlight more general aspects of SSC that may have wider application. In light of this, it is important to lay out the parameters of the study before demonstrating how the model is utilised.

This research focuses on the LAC region as a site of SSC activity. While much cooperation has occurred within the region historically and between multiple countries, Brazil and Venezuela have been identified as two nations that have embraced the idea of SSC and have had the resources to engage significantly in this field over recent years. Further, the role of President Lula of Brazil and President Chávez of Venezuela was paramount to the progress of SSC in the region during their times in office, and as such demonstrate the impact of individuals within international norm change. While these two nations identified strongly with the SSC norms of solidarity, respect for sovereignty, partnership and mutual benefit, they exhibited poignant differences in emphasis, motivation and action of these principles. Hence they provide an interesting example of how norms can be interpreted in a variety of ways, as well as allowing for an assessment of which approach was more successful.

While this study seeks to gain insight into the region's response to Brazil and Venezuela's SSC activities as a whole, it also identifies two recipient small state case studies to examine this more closely. The Caribbean island nations of St Lucia and Grenada were chosen to fulfill this role due to their location within the LAC region but also somewhat apart from Brazil and Venezuela's immediate South American neighbourhood. St Lucia and Grenada therefore serve as case studies in their own right as well as representing the wider Eastern Caribbean region and its relationship with Latin America. These small states are also heavily dependent on external assistance but, being classed as "middle income", are no longer eligible for grant-based Official Development Assistance (ODA). In this way, they are exemplary of middle-income Southern countries that are still in need of assistance but have been required to look beyond traditional donors for support – a gap SSC has sought to fill.

In regards to the timeframe considered by this study, 2005–2016 provide the rough limits for analysis. The discussions on the origins of SSC (see Chapter 3) extend much earlier than this but the data and interviews refer to the period when Brazil and Venezuela (and SSC generally) greatly expanded their projects on the ground. It was also during this time that the principles became solidified and provided a norm regime that could be judged against action. This study recognises that this timeframe can be divided into two eras in the context of Brazil and Venezuela: the era of significant growth in SSC under the leadership of President Lula and President Chávez (2005–2012); and a relative decline due to the loss of these leaders, as well as changing economic conditions (2013–2016).

Finally, as the focus of this research was the Southern perspective of SSC, the definitions of "South" and "South-South Cooperation" were drawn throughout this study through the interviews rather than prescribed from the outset. Regarding the notion of the "South", while the vast differences between countries was acknowledged, the general consensus was that this term encompassed those countries not considered Northern, developed or western in the traditional sense and usually had a colonial history. Although this definition was rather vague, most interviewees seemed clear about what they meant when they talked about the South, even if that definition simply meant "not North".¹⁰ Regarding the term

¹⁰ The one country that was perceived as particularly problematic, however, was China as it didn't appear to sit comfortably in either category:

“South-South cooperation”, Southern stakeholders tended to give SSC a broader scope than Northern-led cooperation and the terms of ODA, and thought it should include any cooperation that could assist a country develop, be it knowledge sharing, trade, subsidies, integration projects etc:

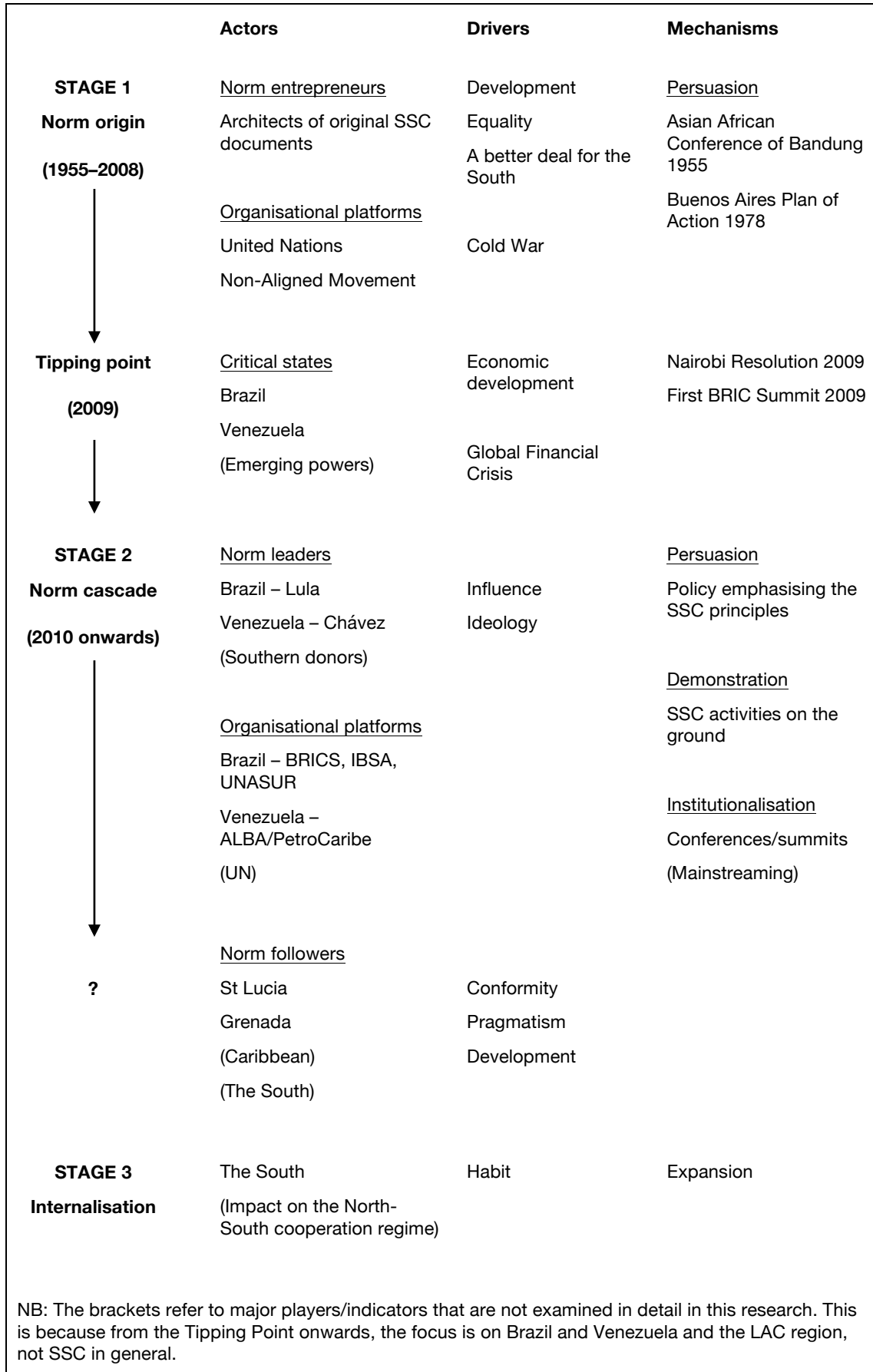
“The South-South cooperation is to me cooperation among the weak countries that get together to create a stronger force for improving their own development.”
[Int.#24.I-Dip]

These two rather broad definitions act as the foundation for this research; as such, discussions on SSC had few limitations as to what could be included so long as they were generally considered to be Southern nations cooperating for the benefit of development.

In reference to the stages shown in Table 1.1, and the parameters of the study discussed above, Figure 1.2 provides a visual representation of how the SSC norm regime can be analysed using Finnemore and Sikkink’s model of international norm change. While the Figure uses stages and rough dates to place SSC on the model, they are used loosely in this study to demarcate progression of the norm regime, rather than precise points in time. As such, the norm origin and norm cascade phases are viewed as fluid, with actors and organisations taking up the regime at different times in a continuation of what has gone before. The discussions below regarding the stages are intended to be an overview of how SSC can fit into this model; the events and major players are discussed in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

“China is China ... I think it’s very difficult to put it South or not. Maybe in some cases in some kind of political place, China ought to be considered South, but China is a sleeping bear. Not so much lately.”
[Int.#03.I-Dip]

Figure 1.2: The life cycle of the South-South cooperation norm regime



Stage 1 – The origin of the SSC norm regime

Finnemore and Sikkink describe this stage as including norm entrepreneurs, backed by an appropriate organisational platform that leads to the tipping point whereby the norm progresses into stage two. In regards to SSC, the first stage of the life cycle – the norm origin – began with the *Asian African Conference of Bandung 1955* where the notion of SSC (and what it might involve) was first put in writing. The next significant document was the *Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries 1978*, which further defined the principles and role of SSC alongside Northern-led cooperation. The norm entrepreneurs have therefore been identified as the architects of these documents – that is, Southern countries and leaders within them who drove these conferences.¹¹ Finnemore and Sikkink describe norm entrepreneurs as being driven by altruistic or empathetic motivations, or ideational commitment to the issue. While morality and empathy may play a part in norm entrepreneurs' thinking, it seems simplistic to dismiss self-interest as a parallel driver. This is a pertinent issue to raise when examining SSC, as the origins of SSC lie within and have been driven largely by the South, and so while the rhetoric appeals to universal themes the tangible benefits appear to lie with those pushing the idea.

The organisational platforms that assisted the norm regime to spread its message and build support were primarily the United Nations – both the Bandung and Buenos Aires conferences included their support of the UN Charter and the Buenos Aires Document was officially endorsed by the UN – and the NAM. The principle of non-alignment was articulated at the Bandung Conference and when the NAM was established in 1956 became a forum for Southern countries to cooperate outside of the Cold War structure; it also promoted the SSC principles of sovereignty and mutual benefit. The drivers of stage one included a search for economic and social development, the quest for international equality (particularly important in an era

¹¹ Fukuda-Parr and Hulme (2011), in a study using this model to explain the emergence of the anti-poverty norm, included a new actor that could be inserted at this stage – the messenger entrepreneur. These are the individuals within the organisational platforms charged with crafting and framing the norm message so it gains traction and leads to a cascade. They are therefore less altruistically driven and more strategic; the goal is to make the norm palatable and widely attractive, which may involve compromise in order to build consensus. In this study, the message entrepreneurs were the group within the UN tasked with taking the anti-poverty agenda and turning it into the Millennium Declaration and then the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The success of this task is shown in the way the MDGs went on to dominate the development landscape throughout its 15-year lifespan. It seems there are no comparable message entrepreneurs in SSC due to its largely *ad hoc* nature and lack of institutional organisation, and therefore the distinction between norm entrepreneurs and message entrepreneurs has little relevance to this research.

dominated by colonialism) and a better deal for the South during the Cold War struggle that frequently saw Southern countries as strategic battlegrounds rather than independent and sovereign states. This stage was lengthy, taking place over 50 years. The main mechanism to drive the norm was persuasion, particularly rhetorical persuasion. The two documents named above – from Bandung and Buenos Aires – were effective in establishing the principles and ideology behind SSC, and were inspirational in their themes. In this sense, SSC developed a strong discursive base over this period. However, it lacked the resources to move from ideas to action – its value was largely rhetorical because it was still somewhat limited in its capacity to demonstrate its virtues.

The tipping point – that is, the point when a critical mass of states have adopted the norm¹² – was therefore reached due to the rapid economic development of the emerging powers during the 2000s – especially the BRIC countries (Brazil, China, India, Russia, later South Africa). The 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC) exposed significant economic problems in Northern nations, which led to some reduction in foreign aid spending. The emerging powers, which were affected by the GFC although not to the same extent, were able to begin to fill this gap and broaden/expand their development assistance activities. In the LAC region, Brazil and Venezuela emerged as the two nations that pursued SSC engagement most actively, largely due to the presence of the Lula and Chávez governments that made foreign policy (and particularly Southern cooperation) a priority during the 2000s. As such I have designated 2009 as the year of most significance due to the formal establishment of the BRIC group, which saw a more organised coming-together of the emerging powers, and the drafting of the *Nairobi Resolution*, which cemented the SSC principles in light of the increase of activity.

Stage 2 – Triggering a SSC norm cascade

The timeframe for stage two of the cycle – the norm cascade – is hence designated as 2010 onwards. The Southern donors can be classified as the norm leaders and the focus has shifted to convincing all nations of the South – the norm followers – to become a part of the SSC norm regime and engage in cooperation that conforms to its principles. Within the LAC region, this role was filled by Brazil and Venezuela, and more specifically by Presidents Lula and Chávez during the early years of the

¹² Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) suggest that one third of all states may be the sufficient amount to classify as a “critical mass”; however, this is an estimate and varies depending on the number of prominent and powerful states – in this case, the emerging powers can be viewed as the “critical states” in this stage.

norm cascade (although as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, they varied in message and emphasis). The drivers behind this included a search for influence and international prestige (in the case of Brazil) and ideological conviction (in the case of Venezuela). Throughout the end of stage one and into stage two, both nations established/joined organisational platforms to expand their message: Brazil with the BRICS and IBSA groups, as well as the regional UNASUR group; and Venezuela with the ALBA and PetroCaribe groups. These groups contributed to the growing institutionalisation of SSC, as conferences and summits on this topic became more common both within BRICS, IBSA and ALBA, as well as through the UN structure that sought to mainstream SSC within all departments.

Brazil and Venezuela (and other Southern donors) continued to use rhetorical persuasion through their foreign policy documents and general promotion of SSC ideas within their respective groups; however, the dominant mechanism became persuasion by demonstration, as shown in the expanded SSC activities both countries offered throughout the region. In this respect, countries such as St Lucia and Grenada witnessed firsthand the SSC norm regime in practice. The drivers behind norm followers adopting this norm regime include the continued search for development support, pragmatism that allowed them to accept support from whomever was offering, and a growing sense of the need to conform with a norm that had become an established part of Southern relations.

I suggest that the life cycle of the SSC norm regime, during the period of research, remained in stage two, having not yet progressed into the norm internalisation stage. To achieve this, the norm regime would have to be followed and supported by the vast majority of Southern countries and become embedded within cooperation structures as an unquestioned practice. At the time of research I argue that this cannot be said to have occurred – as indicated by the amount of research being produced on SSC as “new” or “revitalised” or “emerging” that show it is not taken for granted as an accepted norm regime that can be studied in the past tense. This research therefore focuses primarily on stage two by examining the responses of Southern stakeholders to the SSC norm regime and attempting to identify the effectiveness of the tools of persuasion and demonstration in gaining norm followers. In this way, this research may be illuminating as to how SSC may progress into Stage 3 and what has held it back from reaching this milestone.

Successful norms

While the life cycle of norms explains *how* norms become embedded in international structures, the question remains as to *why* some norms succeed and others do not. A number of aspects have been suggested that increase the chances of a norm progressing to the internalisation stage, including characteristics of the norm itself and the context within which the norm is situated. These criteria will be considered throughout the research and in the conclusion as to how they could be applied to the SSC norm regime.

The first useful characteristic is the ability for the norm to demonstrate coherence, precedent and analogy with other norms. Norms that can be more easily connected to existing norms are more likely to gain traction and legitimacy (Florini 1996; Payne 2001; Kacowicz 2005; Sandholtz 2009). Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) refer to these as “adjacency claims”. This aspect highlights the path dependent nature of norms – norms tend to build on those that came before them. If the new norm requires the toppling of an old norm, however, then the norm entrepreneur must explain why it is “bad” and why this is a necessary change (Florini 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Krook and True (2012, 111) highlight a potential pitfall with using consistency to promote a new norm, stating that this tactic “opens up the possibility that norms can be co-opted to purposes that undermine at least part of the meaning of the norm itself”. During the framing process, norms may become compromised and absorbed by competing forces – in the case of SSC, there is the danger of the Northern-led cooperation framework drawing on the principles of SSC, which has the potential for SSC to seem redundant as an alternative norm regime.

Secondly, appealing to foundational and universal norms that aren’t connected exclusively to specific issues – for example, the values of equality, individual dignity and freedom – can lead to greater uptake (Sandholtz 2009). Likewise, appealing to norms that transcend context and are more global may be more successful than local ones – for example, appealing to the broader notions of human welfare may be more effective than specific cultural norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

Thirdly, outcome-based norms will be more successful than vague norms or those that can’t be measured. This was demonstrated in a study by Krook and True (2012) that examined attempts to change organisational gender norms. They found that promoting gender-balanced decision-making, which included the measurable target of increasing the number of female decision-makers, was more successful than gender mainstreaming, which included the more vague instruction of encouraging

gender sensitivity in policy making. This may prove more difficult with abstract principles such as solidarity; however, it reinforces the need for tangible targets rather than relying solely on relational feelings – something that should be kept in mind when examining SSC norms.

While it is helpful for norms to display certain qualities, as listed above, there are also contextual factors that are said to improve the chances of norm success – specifically the amount of resources available to the norm entrepreneurs and leaders, including communicative resources, worldwide diplomatic representation, significant presence in major international organisations and negotiations, and an effective mass media that can broadcast the benefits of the norm (Sandholtz 2009). Actors with access to these resources will have more opportunity to spread their ideas. This highlights the significant imbalance in global abilities to shape and encourage the uptake of new norms. The more powerful Northern nations (such as the US and Western Europe) have long had these systems in place and have prominent positions in international organisations that are frequently the forum for norm dissemination. If these prove less effective than desired, these states also have access to other “persuasive” resources (ie coercion via sanction or force). The South has historically lacked these resources; even those states that had more developed communicative and media structures on a domestic level were usually limited in their international influence. The rise of the emerging powers was therefore an important milestone in the progression of the SSC norm regime and showed that ideas and principles are rarely enough to drive change – tangible resources to persuade others of their virtue is an essential component.

Research questions

In light of the SSC norm life cycle model presented above, this study examines how this process of SSC norm creation and evolution occurred in the LAC region during the period 2005–2016, identifying Brazil and Venezuela as two norm leaders and St Lucia and Grenada as two potential norm followers. It thereby seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How did Brazil and Venezuela present and demonstrate the SSC norm regime to Latin America and the Caribbean during the period 2005–2016, and thereby emerge as SSC norm leaders?
2. How did potential norm followers in Latin America and the Caribbean respond to the SSC norm regime as presented and demonstrated by Brazil

and Venezuela during this period? Were stakeholders persuaded by the message and action?

Methodology and chapter outline

In order to answer the above research questions, the following methods and chapter structure are used.

Chapter 2 uses historical analysis to examine how Brazil and Venezuela became norm leaders in the SSC regime. Particular focus is given to the prominent leader of each country during the period in the lead up to the tipping point – that is, President Lula in Brazil and President Chávez in Venezuela – as well as the role of the organisational frameworks used by each nation to spread their message – for example, BRICS, IBSA and UNASUR in the case of Brazil, and ALBA and PetroCaribe in the case of Venezuela.¹³

Chapter 3 employs discourse and policy analysis to examine the key SSC documents since the 1950s, as well as the foreign policy documents of Brazil and Venezuela. The focus of this analysis is to discern how SSC has been constructed over many decades to set itself apart from Northern-led cooperation and establish itself as a separate norm regime. In this way, it shows how discourse and rhetoric have been used to persuade countries of the South to support and adopt the SSC principles and thereby reach the tipping point in the norm cycle.

Chapter 4 discusses the effectiveness of these rhetorical persuasion devices. To do this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with LAC diplomats posted in London, as well as a number of SSC experts and observers, to determine how SSC was perceived by those critiquing its workings at a distance rather than on the ground. Both of these groups had exposure to SSC rhetoric but less so to its

¹³ This research included in-person and email interviews with Brazilian representatives in order to gain a greater understanding of Brazil's SSC programmes. While the Brazilians were generally happy to discuss this research, it proved much more difficult to gain a Venezuelan perspective on this topic. Repeated attempts were made to interview a representative from the Venezuelan Embassy in London; however, this was ultimately unsuccessful. This was a continuing challenge throughout the research, whether in London or during the case studies within the Caribbean. The time at which this research was conducted (2015–2016) was during a period of significant upheaval within Venezuela, both economically and politically. As such, they were facing intense media scrutiny. Hence, it may be interpreted that their reluctance to discuss this research was due to a more general reluctance to speak with researchers and journalists of any kind rather than due to not wanting to be involved in this particular project. Attempts were made to contact other officials within the Venezuela Ministry of Foreign Affairs and within the administrative sections of PetroCaribe and ALBA. The only respondents were an official within the executive of the ALBA-TCP, who replied via email to some questions (Int.#20.I-Ven), and a representative from the Venezuelan Embassy in St Lucia (Int.#39.SL-Ven) – both provided responses that clearly reflected official Venezuelan policy.

demonstration, as such their opinions on it were largely based on the persuasive powers of the rhetoric they had been exposed to either directly or indirectly. Diplomats were used as the test group for the persuasiveness of the SSC norm regime due to their unique place within the structures of international relations. Kuus (2014, 33) has described diplomats as “the central agents of geopolitics”, as it is within diplomacy that geopolitical knowledge is circulated. Kuus (2014, 39) goes on to explain, however, that this knowledge “mutates as it travels”.¹⁴ Neumann (2012) has emphasised how globalisation has increased the density of these relationships and how diplomats are significant influencers of foreign policy as they send their reports back from abroad. In regard to international norms, diplomats therefore play a key role in shaping and spreading the norm message and are also indicative of how these messages are being interpreted. They represent both the official position of their individual countries, while also building informed opinions on international movements through their own experience and research. Due to the central and prestigious position of London as a global city, LAC diplomats posted here – especially Ambassadors and High Commissioners – make up some of the most experienced and long-serving members of the foreign ministries within their home states. Many have also served in other large and high-profile postings, such as China, the US and Brazil. As such, the diplomats interviewed as part of this research were drawing on long and vast bodies of knowledge and personal experience to then comment on the SSC norm regime. Thus, though their direct experience with SSC may have been limited, the interviewees were well-equipped with the tools to form an opinion based on what they’d heard and read about it – that is, whether they were persuaded of SSC’s virtue based primarily on its rhetoric. The second group of interviewees were made up of academics, journalists and other observers who examined SSC from a distance and who were generally not involved in policy making or implementation. These interviewees provided their opinions on SSC therefore based on their experiences of what they’d learnt in their research and whether they perceived it to live up to expectations. Appendix 1 provides a list of all interviews conducted during this research, as well as reference codes used throughout the thesis.

Chapter 5 introduces the potential norm followers of St Lucia and Grenada and the role and importance of SSC to these small island nations, as well as to the Eastern

¹⁴ Kuus’ research focuses on the process of knowledge production within the EU, informed by detailed interviews over many years with European diplomats in Brussels. Her 2014 book, *Geopolitics and Expertise: Knowledge and Authority in European Diplomacy*, provides a comprehensive study on the role and value of diplomats within international structures.

Caribbean. This chapter provides essential background to the case studies in order to give the reader a greater understanding of the complex reasons as to why SSC, especially that provided by Brazil and Venezuela, was accepted by St Lucia and Grenada as both a necessity and a choice. It also provides an explanation as to why these two states were chosen, including their high aid dependence and broad experience with external assistance.

Chapters 6 and 7 then identify the means by which Brazil and Venezuela, respectively, demonstrated the virtues and benefits of the SSC norm regime through their development assistance activities to the potential norm followers of St Lucia and Grenada. It pulls together project information from official government documents, media and interview data to provide a comprehensive overview of Brazil and Venezuela's presence in these countries over the time of research (approximately 2005–2016) and the responses of stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada.

To discern whether these demonstrations by Brazil and Venezuela were successful in persuading St Lucia and Grenada to adopt and support the SSC norm regime, again a number of semi-structured interviews were conducted with government officials and stakeholders in both island states concerning their experiences with, and opinion of, SSC generally as well as Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC specifically. These interviewees had directly witnessed SSC either at the policy/governmental level or as participants on the ground (see Appendix 1). This interview data is discussed in Chapter 8, and focuses primarily on each of the SSC principles in turn to determine how the demonstration of SSC, as well as the SSC rhetoric they had been exposed to, had been perceived by stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada and whether the SSC norm regime had therefore been persuasive.

The final chapter seeks to answer the central research questions and provides overall conclusions.

Interview process and analysis

This research used a series of elite interviews¹⁵ to determine whether Southern observers and stakeholders found the rhetoric and demonstration of SSC to be persuasive. The measurement for persuasiveness was therefore in how the interviewees discussed and explained their experiences or knowledge of SSC – did

¹⁵ The following sources were helpful in providing advice on the conducting of elite interviews: Aberbach and Rockman 2002; Beamer 2002; Harvey 2011; Berg and Lune 2012; Blakeley 2012.

they express it in positive terms, did they repeat the SSC rhetoric in a convincing way, did they refer to the SSC principles and their virtues? In order to gather this information, semi-structured interviews were used with open questions that left room for interpretation, as well as space for back-and-forth discussion. The LAC diplomat and Northern commentator interviews (discussed in Chapter 4) contained especially open questions, and attempted to avoid any direct or leading questions that would provide the interviewee with more information about SSC than they may have already had. This was to ensure that the respondent was drawing on the rhetoric and knowledge they had been exposed to and chose to highlight when discussing SSC. However, the use of follow-up questions left space for the interviewee to consider their position and further develop their thoughts. The international observer interviews did not contain any direct questions about the SSC principles; however, if the interviewee raised one of the principles, a follow-up question could be asked. Appendix 2A contains a sample interview schedule for this group; Appendix 3A contains the transcript of a full interview as an example of how these interviews were conducted.

In comparison, the case study interviews conducted during fieldwork (discussed in Chapters 6–8) contained more explicit questions about the SSC principles and about the SSC projects the interviewees were involved in. These interviews were used as a means to gather more information about SSC activities on the ground as well as to determine how effective demonstration had been as a persuasive tool. Hence the interviewees were asked about the relevance of the principles to SSC and were encouraged to think about how they may have been present (or absent) in practice. A sample list of questions that were used during the case study interviews is contained in Appendix 2B; and the transcript of a full interview from this part of the research is contained in Appendix 3B.

The primary challenges associated with conducting these elite interviews and then using them to analyse persuasiveness were the possibility of bias and gathering a truthful perspective from the interviewees. The element of bias largely related to predisposed ideas of the Southern donors, and especially those concerning Brazil and Venezuela. This was overcome by acknowledging the position of the interviewee and the likely biases that would be present during analysis – for example, whether due to complex relations or political opinions they were likely to be more critical (or more forgiving) of activities of certain countries. However, this did not appear to be a significant concern or barrier during the interviews. The use of elite interviews assisted in this – most of the interviewees were public officials

and so were familiar with expressing their views in a relatively unemotional and logical manner and so were aware themselves of exhibiting too much bias in one direction or another. The second challenge was therefore more likely to impact the responses of the interviewees and had to be accounted for – as these elites were mostly government officials, it had to be considered that the opinions they expressed were those as a representative of their government rather than an individual. This was to be expected and not entirely problematic – to interview diplomats is to gain the perspective of a national government, it would be unfair to expect otherwise. However, this research was also interested in gaining more than the official party line, and so the interviews were also seeking honest opinions on the workings of SSC. Again, this concern was not a significant barrier. Most of the interviewees were relatively open in expressing both their positive and negative ideas of SSC, and most were relaxed and candid during the interview. That anonymity was provided as an option, as well as the ability to refuse to be recorded (or to pause the recording at certain points) seemed to be effective means by which to make the interviewee feel more relaxed. In the few interviews where the interviewee appeared to feel constrained in what they could say, they tended to limit their answers – the reason and what they withheld were sometimes easy to deduce and in this way added to the data richness of the research. For example, as government officials of countries that had relations with Brazil and Venezuela, it was clear that some interviewee did not want to appear too critical of programs. That said, most seemed comfortable explaining the limitations of projects and relations.

Throughout the course of this research a total of 55 interviews were conducted between May 2015 and June 2016; 28 with LAC diplomats and Northern commentators, and 27 with Caribbean stakeholders during fieldwork. While an initial list was created of desired interviewees, a process of snowball sampling was also used to broaden the sample and access persons of interest.

The interviews generally took place in person at the interviewee's office: for the diplomat interviews, these were usually conducted at the relevant Embassy or High Commission; interviews with government officials during fieldwork were usually conducted at government offices; a small number of interviews were conducted remotely via phone or skype. The interviews ranged from 21 minutes to 136 minutes with an average length of 43 minutes. Of the 55 interviewees, 46 consented to being recorded. Notes were taken during the interview to highlight any significant phrases or responses. Field notes were also made after each interview to record any behavioural responses or overall impressions that wouldn't be captured by the

recording. The majority of interviews were transcribed in full; in others the recording was used to make detailed notes and take quotes were necessary. Transcriptions were done close to verbatim, with some neatening for clarity. This was because it was important to capture not just the words and phrases uttered but also the feeling or “sense” behind them – hence the pauses, hesitations, searching for words and laughs added to the richness of the data. The interviewees were provided with a copy for approval if requested.

This research utilised thematic analysis to identify the major themes and topics that emerged during the interviews. The transcripts and/or detailed notes were first imported into two N-Vivo project files (one for the international observer interviews and one for the Caribbean stakeholder interviews), which were then coded. The SSC principles were used as codes for each data set; however, other codes were created using an inductive process – as recurring topics emerged over the course of analysis. The codes were organised into major themes and exported for analysis. All recordings, transcripts and data sets are in the possession of the researcher.

Consent was obtained from all interviewees to record, cite and use the information acquired during the interviews. Each interviewee was given the option of refusing to be recorded, as well as to remain anonymous. As such, those who requested anonymity have not been named in Appendix 1. Reference codes have been used throughout the text rather than names for all participants; however, a key at the bottom of Appendix 1 provides code identifiers so interviewee categories can be known when reading the text. A copy of the consent form used throughout this research can be found in Appendix 4. During initial contact, each interviewee was also provided with a Participant Information Sheet that gave details of the research being undertaken and where the information may be published; participants were given the opportunity to ask for more detail if desired. The recordings and transcripts of all interviews were securely stored and protected.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork in St Lucia and Grenada was carried out between February and May 2016. The reasons for choosing these two small Caribbean states are discussed in Chapter 5. Due to the frequently *ad hoc* nature of SSC and the lack of publically-available official documentation either from Brazil, Venezuela or Caribbean nations on specific SSC activities, the only way of obtaining program information and gaining a full perspective of the extent of SSC in St Lucia and Grenada as well as responses by those involved on the ground was to visit the islands and conduct

fieldwork firsthand. The program information detailed in Chapters 6 and 7 was compiled from media sources, government releases, interviews, hard-copy pamphlets provided by interviewees and some secondary sources (particularly in regard to the FAO School Feeding Programme); attempts were made to verify each claim through another source to confirm the activity. Generally, it was much more difficult to find news report, whether from government or local media, on Grenadian projects than it was for St Lucia in regards to both Brazilian cooperation and Venezuelan cooperation. This may have been due to Grenada's limited media reporting and absence of strategic organisations (such as the OECS, which is headquartered in St Lucia). As such, the interviews proved invaluable not only for capturing perspectives on SSC but for gaining information on the projects themselves.

The process of piecing together the SSC programmes conducted throughout the research period (2005–2016) usually involved either an initial finding of a media report that I then discussed with interviewees to gain further information, or came directly from an interviewee that I then followed up with suggested contacts or a search for records. The St George's hospital project between Grenada and Venezuela was a prime example of this method – one interviewee suggested I look into this as a “problematic” example of Venezuelan SSC, and as a result I contacted various government departments to gain more information. Using such a process meant my findings were limited by who I was able to gain access to and what records I could find; however, by the end of my fieldwork I felt confident I had uncovered most of the SSC projects that had been conducted by Brazil and Venezuela within St Lucia and Grenada during this period and spoken to many of the major players who had been involved in these projects.

CHAPTER 2

BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA: THE EMERGENCE OF TWO SSC NORM LEADERS

While renewed SSC activity generally was due to specific global conditions – for example, the increased economic potential of the emerging powers and a shift in Northern focus due to the GFC and the war in the Middle East – Latin America was also experiencing a series of converging events that led to the rise of two SSC norm leaders in the region. The turn of the century marked a new era in Latin American foreign policy. The gaze of the US had shifted, allowing the region to explore new political alliances; the rise of leftist governments renewed the role and importance of the State in promoting development; and strong economic growth over a number of years provided governments with more financial freedom and room to experiment with alternative models of social welfare. The region was also seeking to renew and create integrative and cooperative projects, and two nations in particular, Brazil and Venezuela, had gained the economic strength to expand their involvement in development cooperation. Hence, as SSC became a force across the South during the mid-late 2000s, Latin America proved particularly fertile ground in which it could take root with two SSC norm leaders ready to drive its expansion.

This chapter explores this evolution, discussing first the LAC context and the events that led to the rise of SSC before looking specifically at Brazil and Venezuela. Drawing on the norm life cycle model, I identify the main actors, drivers and mechanisms behind this rise to show how Brazil and Venezuela emerged as SSC norm leaders during this period.

Latin America in the 21st century – Fertile ground for a new type of cooperation

The international relations of Latin America have been marked by a striving for autonomy and independence outside the shadow of the US. In doing this the region has oscillated between adhering to and rejecting mainstream development thinking – the same continent that proposed dependency theory as an alternative to modernisation theory also embraced the US-led neoliberal thinking of the 1980s/90s and then later became the home of alternative social movements such as BuenVivir (Rojas 2007; Escobar 2010; Taylor 2012; Cerdán 2013). There are a number of reasons for this ambivalence, not least of which was the pervasive and

heavy-handed role of the US in the region during the 20th century. Gardini (2011a) explains this as a balancing of pragmatism and ideology; whereas Tickner (2003) refers to it as a mixing of theories to create a “hybrid model” of international relations. In this way, Latin America has proven itself to be a region of the South where development thinking has been actively challenged and alternatives presented. As such, the region’s adoption of SSC in rhetoric and practice sits comfortably with its quest for greater independence, as well as its search for new and effective development models.

However, despite varied attempts at alternative ideas, the development history of Latin America in the mid-late 20th century, to a large extent, followed the conventional thinking of the international financial institutions (IFIs) and the suggestions/demands of the US. The protectionist tendencies of the mid century eventually gave way to the neoliberal movement of the 1980s/90s that was defined by a focus on market mechanisms, the dramatic reduction of State spending, and the implementation of structural adjustment packages of the IMF and World Bank (Nilsson and Gustafsson 2012). By the new millennium, many were frustrated with the neoliberal policies that had seemingly failed to bring significant and lasting development, and with the governments that pandered to the US and submitted to the dictates of the IFIs. As such, during the late 1990s and into the 2000s, citizens across the continent elected left-wing parties that promised to reverse these trends and create a more proactive and inclusive State.¹⁶

This “pink tide” of left-wing governments, while being diverse in policies and the extent to which they were applied, shared certain underlying ideas that bound them together. These principles came to be referred to as a “post-neoliberal” model or the “post-Washington Consensus”, and included elements such as greater use of State power in the economy, a broadening and deepening of democracy, redistributive measures, and renationalisation of resource sectors (Macdonald and Ruckert 2009).¹⁷ The central theme was the attempt at a renewed role for the State in providing guaranteed rights to its citizens, while also maintaining responsible

¹⁶ While each of these new leftist governments promoted different economic and social policies, attempts were made to define this shift and to portray the idea of a “tolerable” left (led, in part, by Brazil) and a “dangerous” left (encouraged by Venezuela) (see Castañeda and Morales 2008; also Crandall 2011; Bernal-Meza and Christensen 2012; but compare French 2010; Ruggirozzi 2011).

¹⁷ While Escobar (2010) asserted that this model was “counter-hegemonic” and had the potential to be a genuine alternative to neoliberal capitalism, many authors have insisted that post-neoliberalism is in fact more of a continuation and adaptation of neoliberal policies than a clean break (see Macdonald and Ruckert 2009; Taylor 2009; Panizza 2009; Grugel and Ruggirozzi 2009, 2012; Yates and Bakker 2014).

fiscal policies (Grugel and Ruggirozzi 2009; Heidrich and Tussie 2009). A benefit of these changes occurring as a “tide”, as it were, was that the region contained a number of somewhat like-minded nations that were amenable to cooperation and shared an interest in renewed regionalism within LAC and without its Northern neighbours.

Hence, while regional organisations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and MERCOSUR were already in existence at this time, it was during the 2000s that regionalism in Latin America began to pick up steam (Hurrell 2007a). Three regional projects in particular stood out as being new, alternative and/or more holistic than what had come before – CELAC, UNASUR, and ALBA. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was established in 2011 as a direct challenge and alternative to the OAS, overtly excluding the US and Canada and openly condemning the US embargo of Cuba (Dominguez 2013). The Venezuelan-led ALBA (formed in 2004) and the Brazilian-led UNASUR (formed in 2008) can be viewed as two examples of a new type of regionalism that has both a political and social agenda, and that seek to supersede the regional projects of the neoliberal era:

“UNASUR and ALBA are expressive of alternative continental strategies for growth and social justice, representative of a more political and confident ‘South’ America, suspicious of US leadership yet still largely in tune with the need for open and competitive markets.” (Ruggirozzi 2011, 436)

While MERCOSUR (formed in 1991 as a response to the US-led Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) initiative (Tussie 2009)) strengthened itself as the main vehicle for trade discussions in the region, UNASUR, which includes almost all the states of South America,¹⁸ became the main political project. ALBA, in contrast, focused on social integration and cooperation, and was the most counter-hegemonic and anti-neoliberal of the three. While these three organisations co-exist without much difficulty, Gardini (2011b, 249) (optimistically and somewhat facetiously) suggested a more effective division of labour could be established, “whereby ALBA would put forward the continental social agenda, MERCOSUR would somehow define the economic and trade scenario, and UNASUR would deal with political and security coordination”. In contrast to this idyllic arrangement, Tussie (2009) highlights the contradiction of sovereign nation states seeking integration and cooperation – that is, how to maintain sovereignty whilst accepting

¹⁸ Only French Guiana is not a member, due to it being a French protectorate.

the duties that go along with organised regional membership? This struggle has played out in diverse and sometimes strange ways:

“Ultimately, Latin America is divided between a rhetorical, almost theatrical, support for continental solidarity and integration and a strong, practical preference for national sovereignty and interest, accompanied by a traditional aversion to supranationality.” (Gardini 2011b, 250)

As shown throughout this thesis, this statement holds much truth, particularly in regards to SSC within the region.

These changes that occurred in Latin America during the 2000s created a space and a moment in time that was ripe for SSC. The focus on a more powerful State, the rights of welfare and the importance of citizenship could be translated across borders through SSC, strengthening the region as a whole. In this way, states could work together to promote more egalitarian and more engaged societies, not only within their own borders but in the region; just as domestic welfare programmes could help to reduce inequalities *within* a country, SSC could help to reduce inequalities *between* countries (Strange 2014). The regionalist projects in Latin America therefore played a vital role in facilitating SSC in the region, and were used as a means for Brazil (through UNASUR) and Venezuela (through ALBA) to engage in SSC with their neighbours. As SSC was a relatively new (or at least newly renewed) form of international development cooperation, Latin America had the potential to play an important role in shaping and promoting its ideas and principles.

While these cooperation projects brought many countries into at least a primitive form of SSC, two countries emerged as norm leaders in the field – Brazil and Venezuela.¹⁹ Like the region as whole, both nations experienced circumstances at this particular moment that provided the necessary conditions and ambition to look beyond their borders and engage in SSC.

Brazil on the global and Southern stage: Searching for a leadership role

Brazil had long sought a more prominent place on the world stage. South America’s largest nation had been increasingly outward looking since the 1990s, initially for economic reasons as markets were gradually opened, but also as a means to gain

¹⁹ Cuba’s long experience in development assistance is the primary example of SSC prior to this renewed era, and deserves much credit for paving the way. As such, it was referred to many times during the interviews in a very positive light. However, Cuba is not the focus of this research due to it preceding the timeframe of study.

influence and status in the Americas and beyond (Gomes Saraiva 2011). The election of the charismatic President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2002 and the announcement of its “emerging power” status as one of the BRICS in 2003, were two events that significantly raised Brazil’s profile in the international realm. While Brazil lacked the weight of some its BRICS peers it found its strength in diplomacy and so to combat its economic and military limitations, Brazil rarely sought international recognition through solo ventures but rather through fostering leadership in coalitions and alliances and engaging in cooperation (de Almeida 2010; Narlikar 2010). Hence, during the early-mid 2000s, when SSC was becoming a renewed force in global relations, Brazil was placed in a strong position to establish itself as a norm leader in this field as it aligned with both its interests and circumstances at that time.

First, Brazil entered a new phase of economic status in global affairs. Brazil was always destined to be a country that could not be ignored: “It has the world’s fifth largest population. It is home to one-sixth of the world’s available freshwater reserves. It ranks as the world’s second biggest food exporter, the fourth biggest food producer, and the ninth biggest oil producer” (Dauvergne and Farias 2012, 905). However, the naming of Brazil in 2003 as one of the BRIC countries cemented Brazil’s role as a major financial player (Wilson and Purushothaman 2003; Malamud 2011).

Secondly, Brazil’s economic success during this period was paired with developmental progress, thanks, primarily, to the political shift that occurred alongside it. The election of President Lula of the Worker’s Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT) in 2002 was based on a campaign that promised the continuation of liberal economic policies but with a greater focus on social justice (Panizza 2009). Lula’s domestic agenda therefore emphasised social spending and pro-poor growth through programmes such as Bolsa Familia²⁰ (Amann and Barrientos 2014) and as a result made significant inroads into seemingly entrenched poverty and inequality (see Table 2.1). Not surprisingly, it was the poor and rural classes who were responsible for re-electing Lula in 2006 (Panizza 2009).

²⁰ Started under President Cardoso but significantly expanded under Lula, Bolsa Familia cost less than 1% of GDP and by 2006 covered roughly a quarter of the population (Panizza 2009, 235).

Table 2.1: Brazil's poverty rate and GINI coefficient, 2000–2012

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Absolute poverty rate (% population living below US\$2 per day)	26.58	23.20	20.22	14.00	9.37	8.38	5.90
GINI coefficient	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.56	0.54	0.53	0.53

Source: OECD 2013, 36.

These development successes gave Brazil credibility when looking to engage in international assistance through SSC.

Thirdly, during the early-mid 2000s Brazil placed more emphasis on foreign policy – a move largely credited to the personal interests of President Lula and his Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim. Lula was popular on both the domestic front²¹ and in the international realm due to his charismatic personality and diplomatic skills, and as a result both he and Brazil gained international recognition during his time in office. Lula used the momentum of Brazil's emerging power status to form a universalist foreign policy that sought relations with any country that would assent, and in doing so shifted Brazil's gaze from its traditional partners in the North to the emerging powers of the South²² and to its own region, as well as seeking structural change in the multilateral institutions (Gomes Saraiva 2011; Burbach et al 2013). These goals were both pragmatic and ideological, as explained by Amorim:

“Brazil's international credibility stems, to a large extent, from the principles that guide her foreign policy... We uphold Brazilian interests with pragmatism, without renouncing our principles and values.” (Amorim 2010, 214)

Brazil's longtime struggle to gain influence and power in the international realm – which Lula continued – was based on its stated goal of creating a fairer global system, particularly for the often-sidelined South (Hurrell 2010). A means to do this, therefore, was to reform the international institutions to be more democratic and give a louder voice to all nations, despite size or wealth – to “democratize globalization” (Sotero 2010, 9). As such, Brazil was eager to use and promote global institutions in its rise to power by attempting to shift global norms in its favour (Burgess 2013a, 2013b). This set it apart from other emerging powers that appeared indifferent to such institutions (eg China) or antagonistic (eg Venezuela). In this way,

²¹ Lula's approval rating was at 80% when he left office in 2011 (Burbach et al 2013, 121).

²² Between 2002 and 2009, Brazil's non-OECD trade went from 38.5% of total trade to 57% (Amorim 2010, 216).

Brazil could impact on the international realm without looking too aggressive or drawing too much attention:

“Although Brazil never seems to say ‘no’, it nevertheless manages to block ideas being pushed by the old core countries without ever being seen to fundamentally challenge the existing international system.” (Burgess 2014, 293)

Dauvergne and Farias (2012, 906) described Brazil’s use of “soft power” – that is, seeking influence through cooperation and mediation rather than through threats and shows of strength – as a system of “co-opting rather than coercing” (see also Nye 2004). An example of this includes the creation of the G20 at the WTO trade talks in 2003, which resulted in the breakdown of negotiations; by forming a coalition Brazil dispersed the blame while satisfying its needs (Burgess 2007). It promoted itself as a bridge between the North and the South – a Southern nation in solidarity with the developing world, and yet as an eager participant in international fora seeking equal status with its Northern counterparts (Narlikar 2010).

Ultimately, Brazil had mixed success over this period in achieving its international goals. Its membership in BRICS and IBSA (discussed further below), as well as its leadership of the G20 and its bilateral pursuits, placed it firmly amongst the emerging powers and gave it an increasingly louder voice – albeit one that was frequently heard in a choir rather than as a solo. However, its failings were conspicuous and indicative of its lack of regional backing – its inability to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) being the most obvious, not least because it failed to gain the support of the region it desired to represent.²³ Brazil also missed out on a WTO leadership position in 2005, in part due to Argentina’s efforts to undermine Brazil’s ambitions through its backing of the Uruguayan candidate (Schirm 2012) (although Brazil did eventually manage to gain the Director position in 2013). Perhaps the greatest hampering of Brazil’s ambitions to gain a UNSC seat was its lack of military capacity.²⁴ On top of these shortfalls, Brazil has also been viewed as overreaching in its involvement in international issues – the greatest example being that of Brazil’s intervention in the 2010 Iran

²³ In 2005, Brazil, Germany, India and Japan made a number of proposals of reform that were presented to the UN, including that more permanent seats should be created to ensure representation from all parts of the globe, in particular from the South. However, this call for reform failed, in part due to the alternative proposal presented by a group of nations that called for the creation of semi-permanent seats instead. Two notable members of this group were Mexico and Argentina – two rivals of Brazil that were especially keen to ensure Brazil did not succeed in its attempt to become a permanent member of the UNSC (Malamud 2011).

²⁴ Brazil had made attempts to demonstrate its military capacity, particularly through its peacekeeping role in Haiti (see Braga 2010; Feldmann et al 2011; Burgess 2014).

nuclear talks, a move the US saw as Brazil recklessly overstepping its bounds (Sotero 2010).

Brazil's thwarted ambitions in the international sphere led it to look to the South for a leadership role, which also required fostering stronger relations with its own region. Brazil hoped to promote and achieve a "multipolar world" – one where Brazil could have a more prominent place, whether on its own or as part of a collective pole (Schenoni 2012). The South American region was the most promising space for this to occur and as such Brazil focused on placing itself in a key position in the region:

"South American integration is Brazilian foreign policy's top priority... Closer economic and political relations contribute to growth and stability. It also increases our (Brazil's and South America's) clout in global negotiations." (Amorim 2010, 227)

Brazil proved its commitment to the region and the South by expanding diplomatic relations – during the Lula years Brazil opened 35 new embassies in Southern states (Sotero 2010); although many are understaffed as diplomats proved to be unwilling to take the posts (Burges 2013a). Further, Brazil sought stronger ties with the South's most powerful player – China – which quickly became Brazil's largest trading partner (Cervo 2010; Sotero 2010; Inoue and Vaz 2012). A significant aspect of Brazil's attempts to gain a stronger role on the Southern stage was through its membership in BRICS and IBSA.

In 2007 BRICS established itself as a formal group (Cervo 2010). Whilst it was mostly focused on gaining economic and business advantage, BRICS also brought together nations with similar international agendas, as Hurrell (2006, 2) stated, "all of these countries share a belief in their entitlement to a more influential role in world affairs". Brazil, perhaps more so than the others, appeared to be driven most strongly by this final point – as the smallest of the BRICS (with the exception of South Africa) and the least militarily powerful, Brazil had most to gain from banding together with stronger (and perhaps more threatening) nations, and as such was eager for the BRICS alliance to succeed. On the other hand, Brazil's membership in IBSA (the coalition of India, Brazil and South Africa, formed in 2003) was based on more ideological and social goals than BRICS. IBSA brought together the biggest democracies of their continents in a group that identified as inherently "Southern" – it sought to represent the South and their issues, particularly the problem of poverty (Soares de Lima and Hurst 2006). Hence, while the BRICS alliance brought Brazil strength and economic advantage, IBSA lifted Brazil's credibility and legitimacy as

representative of the South – although this may be more for the benefit of Northern eyes than Southern (Burgess 2013a). Both of these alliances, however, cemented Brazil's role as amongst the most influential Southern nations, as stated by Amorim:

“Our work with countries across the global South has helped to strengthen the perception of Brazil as a nation whose interests and influence go beyond its own region... If Brazil continues on its current path, it will be the first time that another country in the Americas becomes a global player.” (Amorim 2011, 54)

Brazilian SSC: Challenging international norms

SSC fit neatly within Brazil's circumstances, agenda and ambitions under the leadership of President Lula. Economically, Brazil had risen to a position where it had the capacity to engage in development assistance – it was a “policy of prestige” (Inoue and Vaz 2012; Christensen 2012; Robledo 2015). Politically, it had an engaged and charismatic leader who was comfortable on the global stage. Further, it had achieved its own development success in reducing poverty and inequality, and was therefore ready to share its knowledge. Finally, its goal of international significance required allies, and SSC was a promising means to gain this support. SSC was also a tool aligned with long-held Brazilian ideas – achieving greater solidarity and sovereignty amongst the South through cooperation. Hence, Brazil was vocal about the principles of SSC, and was keen to dispel the idea that SSC was just a stepping stone to DAC membership (Inoue and Vaz 2012; Vieira 2012).

Brazil also had more practical motives, including the opening and expanding of new markets, thereby creating more buyers for its goods and services (Oxford Analytica 2004; German Development Institute 2010; Burgess 2014). That Brazil would seek economic advantage through its assistance programmes is unproblematic in SSC – the principle of mutual benefit ensures that self-sacrificial giving is not expected or desirable. Assisting countries to develop was also beneficial for Brazil in the long term, especially in regards to its regional position – it was prudent for Brazil to want to see neighbouring countries develop alongside it so as to prevent rising immigration due to regional inequality (Burgess 2014).

Regarding the scale of Brazilian SSC, Muggah and Hamann (2012) stated that between 2005 and 2010 Brazil started giving more aid than it received, although this was contested by Inoue and Vaz (2012) who asserted in 2012 that officially Brazil was still a net recipient of aid – however, as most of Brazil's assistance is non-financial or in the form of loans (which are included in this research's definition of

SSC), it is difficult to make accurate comparisons. In terms of concrete numbers, it was estimated that Brazilian SSC reached \$1 billion a year in 2010 (Cabral and Weinstock 2010b). These numbers are reflective of Brazil's peak involvement in SSC, which declined soon after – as shown in Figure 2.1, which plots the number of SSC activities undertaken via the Itamaraty's technical cooperation arm, Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (ABC). This pattern depicts the significant role of President Lula in promoting SSC between 2004 and 2010/11, and President Dilma Rousseff's lessened focus on foreign policy from 2011 onwards. While the decline is clear, it is worth noting that it did not disappear over this time and in 2014 SSC was still higher than 2008 levels.



Source: ABC 2017.

Brazil's main method of engaging in SSC was through technical cooperation agreements (TCAs), whereby it provided skilled experts and resources to implement projects and programmes requested by the recipient nation, usually in the areas where Brazil most excelled, namely health, education and agriculture (see White 2013; Santos and Cerqueira 2015). Between 2003 and 2009 the number of TCAs rose from 23 to 413 (Cabral and Weinstock 2010a, 4), making Brazil the largest Southern provider of such agreements (Dauvergne and Farias 2012). Brazil's use of TCAs was a reflection of its focus on sustainable development – it aimed to transfer skills to the local population and then promptly withdraw, thereby reducing the possibility of aid dependency (White 2013).

Brazil was also a significant participant in triangular cooperation projects, whereby it partnered with a Northern donor and a Southern recipient to implement a development project. These projects made up one fifth of Brazil's TCAs in 2010 (Cabral and Weinstock 2010b) with Brazil showing a strong preference for partnering with multilateral institutions (such as the WLO, FAO and UN) rather than

Northern states (Cabral and Weinstock 2010a). Triangular cooperation was beneficial for Brazil, as it could learn from and exchange skills with the Northern participant, and was a means to maintain relations with Northern-led institutions (Inoue and Vaz 2012). The partnership between Brazil and the FAO via the School Feeding Programme is discussed at length in Chapter 6.

Whilst Brazil lacked the resources to provide significant financial transfers to nations of the South, it used other methods to make up for this. As discussed above, TCAs were a central tenet of this; however, two other methods were also used. The first was by providing concessional loans from its development bank, the BNDES, which became a major funder of infrastructure projects in Latin America and Africa (Burgess 2014). The provision of these loans was usually contingent on the use of Brazilian resources/companies and thereby could be classified as tied aid, which was in line with Brazil's SSC principles (Burgess 2006). The second was the government's encouragement of Brazilian private and public companies (such as Petrobras, Vale and Odebrecht) to invest and expand into the South via BNDES loans that were conditional on or heavily incentivised expansion into Africa (White 2013). These methods are indicative of the blurred notions of SSC and how the definition tends to be more fluid than ODA. It also reveals the potential for private/public entanglements that can be seen in significant political problems that have plagued Brazil in recent times.

Regarding geographical breakdown, Africa became the largest recipient of Brazilian SSC, which was built on common cultural and linguistic links, and as such it provided assistance primarily to the Portuguese-speaking nations in the region.²⁵ This was followed by Latin America and the Caribbean as the next largest recipient. During the period 2005–2016, Brazil engaged in SSC with many countries in South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia and Guyana), Central America (Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama) and the Caribbean (Belize, Cuba, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia), most in the form of TCAs focused on healthcare, education and agriculture. These included cooperation projects involving the control of various diseases, farming practices, human milk banks, agricultural protection, housing and planning, and

²⁵ The percentage of SSC assistance that goes to Africa and to Latin America is contentious and differing numbers are provided: Cabral and Weinstock (2010a, 5) stated that Africa accounted for 50% of TCAs in 2009, whereas Latin America accounted for less than one quarter; White (2013, 130) claims that 67.2% of Brazil's technical operations budget in 2010 went to Africa whereas Latin America received 37.4%; and Amorim (2010, 233) stated in 2010 that Africa received approximately 60% of ABC's aid budget.

child labour protections.²⁶ Specific programmes Brazil conducted in the Caribbean are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

While Brazil's SSC programmes over this time were large and far-reaching, they were not as strategic and organised as might appear; in fact most projects operated on an *ad hoc* basis at the request of the recipient country. The official government department in charge of SSC was the ABC, under the control of the Itamaraty.²⁷ The ABC was originally set up to deal with incoming aid but under Lula it was "infused by a third worldist ideology" and subsequently took on the role of distributing aid (Vieira 2012, 326). The ABC played a largely delegatory role – nations requested Brazil's assistance and the ABC put them in partnership with the appropriate department. As such, Brazil's SSC activities were spread widely through the government and in 2012 had involved 19 different ministries and agencies (Burges 2012, 237). Due to high turnover rates and its delegator role, the ABC had little institutional memory – and no "grand plan" (Burges 2014). The greatest challenge, however, was that Brazil at this time didn't have the regulatory framework to operate as a "donor", as it was still set up as a recipient country. Hence, the public sector didn't have the legal right to use government funds to hire overseas workers or buy products overseas (Cabral and Weinstock 2010b); however, the ABC managed to get around this by channeling funds through multilateral institutions, providing non-financial assistance and working through the BNDES (as discussed above). While this will need to be rectified eventually, there is concern that amending this problem may draw domestic attention to Brazil's overseas aid programme and create a backlash from citizens who feel Brazilian funds would be better spent at home (de Souza 2008).

During the period 2005–2010 Brazil firmly established itself as major player in the South and as a central proponent of Southern cooperation in development assistance through SSC. Its vocal support of SSC principles and its desire to establish a leadership position in the international sphere placed it in a prime position to become a norm leader in this arena – that is, to define the ideas and principles of Southern cooperation and encourage Southern acceptance of the norm. To do this, it required a charismatic norm leader and organisational frameworks to support and promote the message.

²⁶ See ABC's website, <http://www.abc.gov.br/>, for a breakdown of Brazil's SSC projects.

²⁷ Burges (2014) has claimed that the ABC has independence as long as it doesn't contravene the Itamaraty's foreign policy agenda.

Brazil's norm leader – President Lula

As discussed above, Brazil's interest in SSC was closely linked to President Lula and his foreign policy agenda of drawing closer to the South in order to gain international recognition and influence (Inoue and Vaz 2012). Hailing from a working class family and a career in trade union activism, Lula's pro-poor policies and focus on political participation reflected his background and desire to improve the conditions of Brazil's lower classes. As such, Lula's foreign policy agenda could be seen as an expansion of his domestic policies, as well as a personal pursuit to see Brazil expand its reach. Lula's charismatic and confident personality made him popular in international circles – upon seeing him in 2009, US President Obama stated, "That's my man right there", a stamp of approval from another popular figure at that time (Newsweek 2009). Lula's impact was obvious and memorable, with many interviewees crediting him for Brazil's domestic and foreign policy and for driving SSC as a whole (Int.#11.I-Com; Int.#06.I-Dip). Lula's keen interest in SSC and support of its principles, put him – and Brazil – in an ideal position to become a significant voice in this movement, to become a norm leader, a position that made the most of its abilities without overreaching. Lula's Foreign Minister Celso Amorim proved to be an equally strong advocate of this message and was dubbed "the world's best foreign minister" (Rothkopf 2009). Together, Lula and Amorim became a force for Brazil, the South and SSC.

Despite Lula's international popularity, his Southern pursuits were not followed by consensus from the foreign policy community in Brazil, with many uneasy about throwing over Northern relations for the sake of Southern ones or placing too much focus on international rather than domestic issues (de Souza 2008). As mentioned above, the opening of many new embassies in the South over this time was not understood by many, as stated by one Brazilian official, "sometimes just having an Embassy is already too much" (Int.#28.I-Br), let alone providing resources and assistance. That Brazilian SSC was so closely connected to Lula's personal interests also put into question whether it would continue beyond his presidency. This concern was understandable, and proved to be correct. It became quickly apparent that Dilma Rousseff had less enthusiasm for international affairs and that without the support of the executive SSC would decline. Further, Dilma Rousseff faced significantly different political and economic circumstances than had Lula during his tenure, which led to the necessity to focus on internal concerns. Burges (2014) claimed that the aid budget was significantly cut under Dilma Rousseff and that Itamaraty officials had to say no to requests for technical assistance. However,

despite sharp declines, Brazil's foreign policy continued to be proactive and outward looking, focused on international esteem as well as regional integration, albeit to a lesser extent than under Lula (Christensen and Kolling 2014). That said, Lula's presidency was undoubtedly the moment of most impact and he was the most influential player in Brazilian SSC.

Searching for an organisational platform

In order for Brazil to spread and lead the SSC norm regime, it required the support of an organisational framework. Brazil had two options – to make use of regional integration projects or focus on new international fora.²⁸

Regional organisations

Mercosur and UNASUR were the two regional forums in which Brazil had a significant voice and a potential leadership position; however, neither was designed to promote SSC per se, although both were supportive of cooperation within the region. Some aspects did take a regional SSC tone. For example, the MERCOSUR Fund of Structural Convergence (FOCEM) – of which Brazil supplied 70% of the Fund's resources – was set up in 2005 with the goal of addressing inequalities in the region and promoting development (Amorim 2010). Within UNASUR, the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA) and UNASUR Salud, which focused on streamlining healthcare systems in the region and promoting universal healthcare for all citizens (Buss and Ferreira 2010), could also be viewed as examples of SSC within the region. That said, these tended to be framed as specific integration projects, rather than SSC that could go beyond Latin America. One of the greatest benefits of these regional organisations to SSC, however, was the frequent meetings that brought member states together, where new bilateral cooperation projects could be discussed and arranged – coffee breaks at international forums were frequently cited by interviewees as where a number of SSC projects arose.

Despite the lack of SSC rhetoric in Mercosur and UNASUR, the biggest challenge was that these organisations were reluctant to grant Brazil an overt leadership role

²⁸ While there are other international organisations that promote an alternative way of conducting development cooperation between all partners, such as the Development Cooperation Forum and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, which may also have been an area of influence for Brazil, the focus in this research is on the exclusively Southern organisations that Brazil and Venezuela were a part of and had the potential to lead/greatly influence. This is due to the emphasis of this research being on SSC as a specifically Southern phenomenon rather than a global norm regime, at this stage at least.

within the region. Brazil had always been somewhat removed from its neighbours due to differences in language and culture (Sotero 2010), and historically Brazil had seen itself as separate from Latin America (Bethell 2010). Another persistent challenge was that many countries were suspicious of Brazil's agenda and didn't want to see the rise of another hegemon in the American hemisphere. As a result, Malamud (2011) claimed that Brazil's quest for leadership through regional integration had ultimately failed. Hence, while the region would be important for fostering bilateral SSC, the regional organisations looked unlikely to become the podium from which Brazil could achieve its status as a norm leader.

Southern organisations

The two Southern organisations with the potential to be a SSC platform for Brazil were BRICS and IBSA. Despite some achievements, such as the start up of the New Development Bank (NDB) as an alternative financing institution to the World Bank and IMF,²⁹ BRICS was described by one interviewee as “more symbolic than effective” (Int.#15.I-Com). However, its symbolism is indeed significant, and was particularly useful for Brazil, which is dwarfed by the likes of China and India, and so membership amongst such giants undoubtedly raised its international clout. That it was a smaller member, however, also meant that it would be unlikely to find a leadership position within the group, especially in regards to SSC as all of the BRICS were engaged in such activities. Another challenge in Brazil using BRICS as an SSC platform was that, despite it strongly emphasising cooperation in an ever-expanding array of areas amongst its members, which could therefore be considered SSC, it was not vocal about SSC generally. The focus was primarily on abiding by UN and multilateral laws and systems, and it was therefore supportive of the Global Partnership for Development rather than creating its own framework. That said, it stated a desire for a multipolar world and was supportive of the SSC principles in its declarations – that is, solidarity, mutual benefit and partnership; however, the term “South-South cooperation” wasn't mentioned overtly in a major declaration until the 7th BRICS Summit in 2015:

“We are committed to further strengthening and supporting South-South cooperation, while stressing that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to North-South cooperation which remains the main channel of international development cooperation.” (BRICS 2015, para 66)

²⁹ The BRICS agreed to set up the NDB at the 5th BRICS Summit in 2013 with each member contributing equally to the \$1.5 billion start-up capital; by 2016 it was operational with its headquarters in Shanghai (New Development Bank 2016).

The caveat that it would not replace North-South cooperation was reflective of official SSC rhetoric, but was also a means for these major economic powers to absolve themselves from significant responsibility of ensuring Southern development. As a result of these factors, BRICS therefore did not prove to be a suitable organisational framework for Brazil to spread the SSC norm regime.

In contrast, the alliance between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) appeared more eager to represent Southern interests and engage in SSC from its founding in 2003 and had a specific arm dedicated to development cooperation more broadly. The IBSA Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) was established in 2004, with each country contributing \$1 million a year, to be managed by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) (Vieira 2012). The goals and methods of the IBSA Fund were reflective of Brazil's particular focus on technical cooperation:

"IBSA countries utilise successful methods, technologies and initiatives based on their own experiences and work with interested countries in distributing this expertise and knowledge as they can benefit those facing similar developmental challenges." (IBSA Dialogue Forum 2016)

Further, IBSA expressly supported SSC and its principles:

"The Leaders recalled that South-South cooperation is a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, a partnership among equals, and must be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit." (IBSA Dialogue Forum 2011)

IBSA was also vocal about its status as "a purely South-South grouping of like-minded countries", suggested reform of the UNSC and IMF, and promoted other Southern-inclusive groups such as the G20 (IBSA Dialogue Forum 2011) – as such, it was a forum built for challenging global norms. As such, IBSA had the most potential to be Brazil's platform for promoting SSC and for establishing itself as a norm leader in the field. Unfortunately, the tangible results of IBSA have been limited, as has its impact on the development framework (Stuenkel 2015). Rodrigues (2016) highlighted problems within IBSA that have hampered its success, including a lack of common language and culture, too great a focus on financial cooperation over social and environmental cooperation, and a consistent overshadowing by BRICS. Whilst IBSA meetings were frequent and regular up to 2011, these reduced dramatically after this time – coinciding, perhaps not uncoincidentally, with the end of Lula's tenure as President of Brazil. As such, IBSA

seems to have been closely aligned with the most enthusiastic era of Brazilian SSC, and mirrors its rise and fall. This would suggest Brazil's, and especially Lula's, impact on the group was significant and was therefore the most fitting forum to establish and spread the SSC message if it had been more effective.

Overall, Brazil made its mark on the world stage in a number of ways over this early period. Under the leadership of President Lula, Brazil became more visible in the international arena and began to look as though it would take its place as one of the leading Southern powers of the 21st century. Its membership in BRICS and IBSA, as well as its involvement in the multilateral institutions, placed it amongst the major Southern and Northern players. However, it was its embrace of SSC that provided Brazil with the most scope for leadership – it had a clear vision of the norms and principles that should dictate the terms of SSC and engaged in SSC activities on an increasing scale. As such, it emerged as a norm leader in this field during this period. However, it faced setbacks in this goal. The problem of finding a suitable organisational framework to expand its message proved a stumbling block; only the fledgling IBSA Dialogue Forum had the ability to be used as a platform for Brazil to promote SSC. The loss of President Lula and the lack of interest of his successor in expansive foreign policy also impacted heavily on Brazil's SSC programmes and message. Finally, the political and economic turmoil that engulfed the country by the end of this research led to a necessary turn inwards. While it seems unlikely Brazil's interest in SSC will disappear entirely, its role as norm leader has declined dramatically. As such, the period under Lula when circumstances aligned to thrust Brazil onto the global, and Southern, stage may have been merely a moment in time rather than a lasting legacy.

Venezuela's unique approach to global and Southern relations

In some ways the emergence of Venezuela on the world stage mirrored aspects of the rise of Brazil: both became a more assertive regional and global player in the early-2000s when a leftist government, led by a charismatic President, was elected who promoted a stronger role for the state in the economy, a progressive social agenda focused on reducing poverty and a more outspoken and determined foreign policy. However, while Brazil pursued these goals in a more moderate, non-threatening way, Venezuela adopted a more extreme, proactive position with a heavy emphasis on Southern relations. Venezuela's adoption of SSC was equally radical; it sought to expand the socialist agenda within the country to the region

(and beyond) through a series of extensive cooperation programmes that would work to reduce inequalities while also creating allies, which it desperately needed. That Venezuela made such bold moves was due in part to a high oil price but also to the personal interests and drive of President Hugo Chávez. Hence, like Brazil, at this moment in time Venezuela had the necessary conditions to become a norm leader in SSC – politically, economically and in its foreign policy.

Venezuela has a unique history in the region because of two factors: first, it enjoyed a relatively stable democracy after 1958 (Reid 2007); and secondly, Venezuela has some of the world's largest oil reserves (Mähler 2011). However, the combination of an uncompetitive democratic system and oil wealth led to over-dependence on a singular commodity, inefficiency and a corrupt political elite. The 1980s oil and debt crisis hit Venezuela hard and the government was forced to adopt the neoliberal agenda of the IMF in order to keep the economy functioning. By 1989 over half of the population lived in poverty and when President Pérez raised public transport costs that same year, discontent overflowed and resulted in the Caracazo riots that left hundreds dead due to brutal military crackdowns (Reid 2007). In 1992 Hugo Chávez led an unsuccessful coup against the Pérez government (Buxton 2010), and Chávez was sent to prison for two years. In 1998, Chávez ran for President and was elected by a frustrated public that was ready for a leader most radically opposed to the status quo (Stone 2009; Panizza 2009).

A worrying aspect of Chávez's rule was the centralisation of power that took place during this time. A successful constitutional referendum to establish a Constituent Assembly and give greater powers to the executive took place in 1999; under the new constitution Chávez held another presidential election in 2000, which he won with 59% of the vote (Reid 2007), and subsequently pushed through 49 special laws aimed at reversing neoliberal trends, allowing the expropriation of land and the nationalisation of oil companies (Ellner 2008). During this time Chávez became more combative with his rhetoric, becoming highly critical of all opponents and installing changes without offering persuasive explanations of their need. An angry opposition staged a briefly successful coup in 2002; however, despite the US's support of the new government, Chavistas across Venezuela ultimately managed to secure his return (Stone 2009; Ellner 2010). The opposition continued its offensive with the 2003 PDVSA strike, an action that backfired spectacularly when it ended with the firing of 18,000 employees and their replacement by loyal Chavistas (Reid 2007). The opposition then went on to make the mistake of encouraging their supporters not to vote in the 2004 mayoral elections and the 2005 congressional elections,

which led to a landslide victory for Chavista candidates, granting Chávez (who went on to win the 2006 elections with 63% of the vote, at which time he also won a referendum to remove term limits) the power he needed to implement more radical reform (Ellner 2008).

By 2004 Chávez had gained enough power to usher in a new economic model called “21st century socialism” (Carroll 2013). This model had two essential elements: it prioritised social goals over economic ones; and sought greater citizen participation in the political realm. Chávez’s government wasn’t seeking small social gains but instead a process of social transformation. First, Chávez attempted to usher in a system of “radical democracy”, which promoted majority rule and direct participation (Ellner 2010; Panizza 2009). Secondly, Chávez dramatically increased social spending on programmes called “missions”³⁰ in areas including education, healthcare and housing (Ellner 2010; Muhr 2012b). Improving conditions wasn’t the only goal, however; this was a battle for hearts and minds. Hence, Venezuela’s Higher Education For All (HEFA) policy, which promoted university education for all people, also involved teaching citizens a different form of social understanding than traditional education by preaching solidarity and cooperation rather than individualistic competition (Muhr 2010). Whilst opinions were mixed about the suitability of such schemes, a more practical problem was that the missions stressed quantity over quality and therefore were of lower value than traditional schools and medical systems (Ellner 2010). Despite the problems and criticisms, Venezuela had significant success in effecting social change, especially in lowering poverty rates – between 2005 and 2012 the poverty rate dropped from 43.7% to 25.4% (OECD 2014). As with Brazil, these development gains gave Venezuela credibility when engaging in and promoting SSC, as well as a model on which to build its development assistance programmes.

In order to pay for these programmes, Chávez also had to implement extensive economic changes that aligned with his socialist agenda. The central component was through the promotion of economic nationalism, and nationalisation, which led to government control of the oil industry as well as most infrastructure industries (see Chaplin 2014). As such, Venezuela was in the unique position of being able to

³⁰ The missions were the means by which social programmes were organised and carried out throughout the country and beyond, including: Misión Barrio Adentro (sending Cuban doctors into poor communities, increasing access to healthcare); Misión Robinson (literacy); Misión Robinson II (primary schooling); Misión Ribas and Misión Sucre (access to high school and university); Misión Zamora (redistribution of land and resources to peasants); Misión Vuelvan Caras (assist urban poor to move to rural cooperatives); and Grandes Misiones in housing and agriculture (Burbach et al 2013).

prioritise social issues while pushing economic ones down the agenda (Purcell 2011). For Chávez to implement such wide-reaching programmes, however, he had to secure the most value from these resources. Hence, one of Chávez's first international actions as President was to ramp up Venezuela's involvement in OPEC, of which Venezuela was a founding member (Karl 1997). A bloc made up of non-Northern nations with the ability to manipulate the prices of one of the world's most valuable commodities, OPEC provided a unique opportunity to both benefit the country financially and foster Chávez's Southern-focused foreign policy. Chávez's goal was to convince the OPEC members to stabilise prices by controlling production quotas; in this way, the oil price could be kept above a certain level and guarantee profits (Cannon 2009). This mission was successful – in November 1998, the crude oil price was \$17.02 per barrel, by November 2000 it had reached \$47.39, reaching its peak in June 2008 at \$157.04 (adjusted for inflation) (Macrotrends 2017).

Due to the continual rise in oil prices over this period, there was less pressure to fund welfare programmes through tax schemes and less need to work with private companies (Benzi 2013). It allowed the government to fund generous social programmes and provide affordable goods and services for the poor, including cheap petrol (Ellner 2010). While these goals were noble, it had an inherent vulnerability – a nation built on oil wealth and little else is in danger of the day the oil runs out, the price of oil collapses or the world moves to different energy systems (not to mention the problem of climate change). Other countries in this position, such as Norway, created sovereign wealth funds and carefully managed their oil reserves; Venezuela, on the other hand, spent all profits with abandon and had virtually no eye on the future – economic mismanagement became its greatest liability, and when the oil price fell dramatically in 2014 the fragility of the system was fully exposed (International Crisis Group 2014).

During the early stages of the revolution, there was great excitement about the possibilities of this radical economic and social model; Meltzer went so far as to say that Venezuela was “a poster child of post-neoliberal policy practices” (2009, 90). However, while there were some positive outcomes to this type of governance, including greater empowerment, higher political involvement (Ellner 2010) and a reduction in the poverty rate, there were also substantial negatives, including the personalistic rule adopted by Chávez, failed economic policies and ineffective and/or inefficient social programmes, that created a backlash from opposition both

within and outside Venezuela.³¹ Further, the radical nature of Chávez's Bolivarian model ensured the rise of powerful enemies; as such, Venezuela needed allies.

The international relations of Venezuela during this period had two essential features – a strong anti-US stance, and a willingness to engage with any other nation (including unsavoury alliances, such as that with Iran³²). Regarding the US, relations were initially cordial when Chávez came to power; however, once President Bush took office relations quickly deteriorated into a war of words between the two countries.³³ Hostilities did not stop at rhetoric, however. There hasn't been a US ambassador in Caracas since 2010 when Venezuela refused to confirm the appointment; and while the US was accused of actively supporting the anti-Chavista movement (Cannon 2009), Venezuela increasingly sought to influence other nations to turn away from the US and cut financial ties. For example, Venezuela purchased Argentina's debt in 2005–2007 to remove its obligations to the IMF, although this was at higher rates than the IMF had charged (Corrales 2009). Despite the animosity, during this period the US remained its biggest trading partner – the US was dependent on Venezuela for oil and Venezuela was dependent on the US buying it (Dominguez 2013).

In addition to seeking a variety of state allies to buffer itself from US disdain, Venezuela also sought to form links with leftist citizens beyond the confines of national governments, via ideological appeals for support as well as by providing assistance through local groups and authorities.³⁴ As Raby (2011, 173) stated: "Venezuelan diplomacy has scarcely left any stone unturned in the quest to diversify the country's international relations and promote both a multipolar world and counterhegemonic alliances." Venezuela was eager to be a part of a multipolar world where US power was counter-balanced and contained; it therefore sought collective strength as a way to form these poles – for example, through non-

³¹ For this reason, much of the literature over this time on Venezuela was deeply divided between enthusiastic supporters (see e.g. Buxton 2010; Muhr 2010, 2011, 2012c; Raby 2011; Cole 2011; Dominguez 2013; Burbach et al 2013) and adamant critics (see e.g. Burges 2007; Reid 2007; Corrales 2009; Chaplin 2014); however, there were some authors who attempted to bridge this divide (see e.g. Ellner 2008, 2010, 2013; Tussie 2009; Panizza 2009; Benzi 2013).

³² The relations Venezuela formed with these so-called "pariah states" questioned its commitment to human rights and perhaps was more provocative than effective in results (Cannon 2009).

³³ Chávez referred to US President Bush as the "devil" at a speech to the UN in 2006; and Donald Rumsfeld compared Chávez to Hitler later that same year (Cannon 2009; see also Bonomi and Pan 2013).

³⁴ For example, Venezuela provided cheap heating oil to residents of the Bronx at the request of the local mayor (Ellner 2008).

geographic groups such as OPEC, through regional projects (Latin America being the most promising potential “pole”), and also by forming relations with other emerging powers already making their presence felt on the world stage, most notably China³⁵ (Cannon 2009).

Whilst Venezuela sought connections with a number of global players, the most important focus of its foreign policy was on its own region. However, when Chávez came to power in 1999, Venezuela’s only leftist ally was Cuba, and the majority of Latin America was still party to the neoliberal agenda of the 1990s. During the “Pink Tide”, however, much of Latin America followed Venezuela to the left (to varying degrees), although it wasn’t until Bolivia elected Evo Morales in 2006 and Ecuador elected Rafael Correa in 2007 that Venezuela had radical leftist allies in the region (Dominguez 2013). During Chávez’s rule and beyond, Venezuela was an active and eager participant in all regional projects, including UNASUR, MERCOSUR and CELAC (Cannon 2009). Indeed Brazil and Venezuela worked together to create UNASUR as a response to the FTAA, and it was Chávez who pushed for the name to be the Union of the South rather than a “community” (Briceño-Ruiz 2010). However, the differing goals of the two countries saw Venezuela branch off with ALBA, which had a more radical social agenda (Riggirozzi 2011). Despite its radical policies, Venezuela was an accepted member of the Latin American community, with the MERCOSUR countries supporting Venezuela’s bid at a UNSC seat in 2006 (Stone 2009).³⁶

Venezuela’s search for Southern allies and its focus on regional integration led to an extensive SSC programme that went beyond simple bilateral projects to create a radical alliance that sought to reduce inequalities throughout the region. As such, Venezuela positioned itself to become an SSC norm leader to rival Brazil’s more moderate stance.

Venezuelan SSC: Integrative and expansive with a radical agenda

That Venezuela engaged so enthusiastically in SSC under Chávez can be reduced to three explanations: it fostered a direct challenge to US power in the region and in

³⁵ By 2006, China and Venezuela had signed 25 bilateral agreements (Cannon 2009), and in 2013 China offered Venezuela a \$5 billion credit line from the China Development Bank (Dominguez 2013).

³⁶ The only nation in the region that Venezuela had frosty relations with was Colombia – a relationship that seemed inevitable given this was the US’s closest ally in the region with the longest-running right-wing government in South America (Cannon 2009, 188; Chaplin 2014).

the South; it was an extension of the radical socialist agenda within the country; and it provided Venezuela with allies and support. As mentioned above, under Chávez Venezuela supported and actively pursued a multipolar world and as such took a similar stance to Brazil in recognising that a cooperative and collective Latin America would be more successful in achieving this than any one nation alone (Ellner 2008). In order to strengthen the region to achieve this status, Venezuela sought not only cordial relations with its neighbours but to revive the Bolivarian idea of a united and integrated Latin America. As such, Venezuela's SSC programmes went beyond simple bilateral projects to form its own SSC network, ALBA (as well as PetroCaribe), that would tackle regional (and in some cases, extra-regional) inequalities using Venezuela's oil wealth – thereby paying down its “social debt”, as it stated. The programmes reflected the domestic social agenda implemented at home by extending access to missions to external participants, and as such were consistent with the stated motivation of a moral imperative to assist the poor.

That this project was successful in building allies is difficult to dispute, as discussed specifically in relation to the Caribbean in Chapters 7 and 8. Critics such as Chaplin (2014) described ALBA as a “bribery system” and Corrales (2009, 100) argued that Venezuela used “social power diplomacy” in the form of handouts and assistance to “spread radical leftist ideology and incite political protest”. In many ways, Venezuela left itself open to such criticisms. Unlike Brazil, it was hesitant to view SSC as a legitimate way to make allies, instead insisting that it was pure in its motives (a difficult claim for any state to make). While these criticisms may have made some nations skeptical of getting involved with Venezuela, the enticement of significant development assistance and favourable oil terms quickly trumped these concerns.

ALBA/PetroCaribe

While Brazil searched for existing organisations within which to promote and embed its SSC norm message, Venezuela created its own frameworks – ALBA and PetroCaribe – to act as both its central means of engaging in SSC and demonstrating the value of this new norm regime.

The Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA) served as Chávez's attempt to expand his domestic socialist vision and seek the integration of the Latin American continent envisaged by Simón Bolívar in the early 19th century (Tussie 2009). Formed in 2004 via a number of bilateral agreements between Venezuela and Cuba as an alternative to the FTAA, by 2016 ALBA included 11 member countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador,

Grenada, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Venezuela (with Haiti and Suriname seeking full member status) (ALBA 2014). ALBA was built on a holistic agenda that included food security, health, education, environmental management, trade, investment, social inclusion, sport, media and cultural exchange (ALBA-PTA 2014).³⁷ ALBA aimed to be different to neoliberal integration via its key principles of “complementarity, as an alternative to competition; solidarity as opposed to domination; cooperation as a replacement for exploitation; and respect for sovereignty rather than corporate rule” (Girvan 2011c, 161). The “conditions” of membership in ALBA included support for its general principles, the utilisation of the public sector only (the private sector and NGOs could not be used as partners), and programmes should be primarily aimed at social goals and assistance for the poor (Girvan 2011c).

ALBA included a number of social projects available to all member states. For example, ALBA-Health was based on the premise of the human right to health services and access to medicines, and included three Grand National Projects³⁸ to provide this: a regulatory arm (ALBAMED); a manufacturing and distribution arm (ALBAFARMA); and a rehabilitation and prosthetics arm (ALBAPROR). The well-known Miracle Eye Mission, based on the expansion of the original Cuban programme whereby the poor were flown to Cuba and provided with treatment at no cost, restored the eye sight of over 3 million people in 15 countries between 2006 and 2013 (Dominguez 2013; Muhr 2008). Other health programmes included epidemiological surveillance to monitor disease and outbreaks, the recording and tracking of disabled people, and cooperation with a Brazilian company, POLIOR, to provide orthopaedics (ALBA 2014). Further, the ALBA Food Fund worked with the FAO and CELAC to reduce hunger and undernourishment in the region (SELA 2015).

ALBA Education was another area that achieved significant results over this time. Between 2004 and 2014, the “*Yo si puedo*” programme, which sent educated volunteers to rural and remote areas, taught almost 4 million people to read and write and led to the declaration of 100% literacy rates in Nicaragua, Bolivia and

³⁷ For details of ALBA, see Muhr 2010, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Yaffe 2011; Linares 2011; Benzi 2013.

³⁸ The formation of cross-border Grand National Projects (GNPs) and Grand National Companies (GNCs) were a response to capitalist monopolies, such as private multilateral corporations (Muhr 2010).

Ecuador by 2008; also over this period, 789 people graduated from ALBA scholarship programmes (Muhr 2013; ALBA-PTA 2014).

ALBA also entailed a financial component. The Bank of ALBA, created in 2008 as an alternative to IMF and World Bank loans, provided funding for 42 projects at a total of US\$344.9 million by 2014; further, the sucre (a currency established in 2010 to challenge the dominance of the US dollar in the region) witnessed a transfer of funds amongst its users of over US\$2.5 billion during its first four years (Yaffe 2011; ALBA-PTA 2014).

In terms of a South-South cooperation project, ALBA was remarkably sophisticated and well-organised at the peak of its influence (2005–2013). It had an effective structure combining official state apparatus and civil society, was well-funded through Venezuela's oil wealth, and was able to utilise Cuban expertise in providing healthcare, education and other social projects. On paper at least, it included all aspects of society and had a clearly defined ideology and mission; and, although a radical project, its commitment to national sovereignty allowed it to coexist peacefully alongside other organisations in the region. That said, ALBA suffered from similar problems that plagued Venezuelan domestic politics. For example, due to a highly centralised structure that required Presidential approval even for minor projects, the process was often slow (Girvan 2011c). Of course, the most obvious concern was ALBA's dependence on Venezuelan oil wealth (Ellner 2008). The dramatic decline of the oil price in 2014, exposed and highlighted these structural flaws, as well as the lack of "rainy day" planning on the part of the Venezuelan government.

This dilemma, however, was most prominent in the case of Venezuela's second SSC framework, which focused on providing oil and financing to the Caribbean region – PetroCaribe.³⁹ Founded in 2005, by 2016 PetroCaribe consisted of 19 member states: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Venezuela. That is, almost two thirds of CELAC members, 12 of the

³⁹ Venezuela's oil programmes are arranged under PETROAMERICA (the umbrella organisation that includes PetroCaribe, PetroAndina and PetroSur); PetroCaribe is the most developed and extensive of the organisations.

15 CARICOM members,⁴⁰ and all independent OECS members. The main benefit for PetroCaribe members was the ability to finance part of the oil payment at low rates over the long term. A portion of the loan could then be used to fund social programmes within the state, while the rest was invested to ensure payment could be made when due. Terms were agreed on a bilateral basis to allow for special and differential treatment, although Table 2.2 shows the general financing terms that acted as the benchmark for negotiations. The average amount financed between 2004 and 2014 was 50%, indicating the high price of oil over this period and how valuable this programme was to member states at this time. Payment could also be made in-kind – for example, Guyana previously paid in rice (Sanchez 2015).

Table 2.2: PetroCaribe financing terms

Price per barrel in US\$	% to finance	Terms
≥ 15	5	2-year grace period; 17 years to pay at 2% interest
≥ 20	10	
≥ 22	15	
≥ 24	20	
≥ 30	25	
≥ 40	30	2-year grace period; 25 years to pay at 1% interest
≥ 50	40	
≥ 80	50	
≥ 100	60	
≥ 150	70	

Source: SELA 2015, 13.

As well as providing favourable financing terms, Venezuela also provided the necessary infrastructure for storage and transportation (and made regular trips to carry out maintenance), as well as training for local technicians and workers (PetroCaribe 2014a; Int.#34.Gr).

The structure of the deal was as follows. PetroCaribe required the establishment of a relevant public organisation within the member state that was part owned (at least 49%) by PDV Caribe (the central company distributing the oil for PetroCaribe). That body was responsible for oversight of the agreement and its principles, as well as cooperation between all stakeholders (SELA 2015). It purchased the oil from PDVSA (Venezuela's national oil company) and sold it on to a private power company, and then paid to PDVSA the required amount upfront and the rest was divided, a portion of which was given as a grant to the government to be used for social projects, and the rest was invested. It was therefore this public body within the member state that

⁴⁰ Montserrat didn't join as it is a British Overseas Territory, Barbados was reluctant to incur debt, and Trinidad and Tobago have their own oil reserves (Maingot 2011).

was responsible for paying the loan, not the government (Int.#34.Gr). The government was therefore free to use the grant funds as it saw fit, with the only stipulation that they be used on “social programmes”, a rather loose definition. For example, Haiti funded food distribution programmes and provided monthly allowances for the poor, and Jamaica provided aid to small farmers and businesses, refurbished a zoo and installed flushing toilets in schools (*Caribbean News Now* 2014c).

As well as allowing for these in-country social funds, PetroCaribe also included funding for social projects that were administered through the organisation. An example of this was the ALBA-Caribe Fund, for members of both ALBA and PetroCaribe, which was used to support social and economic programmes (Girvan 2011b). Members had to apply for these grants and show how the project would fulfill the guidelines, including how it would advocate for economic, social and cultural rights, encourage community participation, promote gender equality, and reduce poverty; further, the project must align with the MDGs/SDGs, must be sustainable, and universal access was encouraged (PDVSA undated). PetroCaribe also included an Action Plan for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty designed to strengthen technical cooperation to address food security and sovereignty, and support small farmers and supply chains; this was an extension of the CELAC agreements on this issue, as well as the MDGs/SDGs, and referred to FAO initiatives, such as the School Feeding Programme (PetroCaribe 2013c). These two examples show how PetroCaribe engaged with other development frameworks – it was an interconnected organisation within both Latin America and beyond. Further, in 2014 PetroCaribe asked OLADE (Latin American Energy Organisation) for assistance in producing a study on how member states could be made more energy efficient, as well as advice on how to develop energy alternatives (PetroCaribe 2014c). This showed at least a step in the right direction regarding oil dependence and energy policy; however, these attempts seemed rather vague and concrete action appeared limited.

PetroCaribe also included a Social and Cultural Structuring Programme to form stronger cultural understanding and ties between member states, including language training, arts exchange, and cooperation in the tourism sector (PetroCaribe 2013b). This notion of fostering integration and understanding within the organisation was reflected in the large number of meetings that occurred at this time in the life of the organisation (eg there were at least six meetings of PetroCaribe in 2013–2014), as well as the wide range of topics that were discussed,

from food security to renewable energy to language exchange. After 2013, Venezuela began attempting to establish the PetroCaribe Economic Zone to create production chains and facilitate greater trade and cooperation between member states (PetroCaribe 2013a; *Grenada Informer* 2015c) – how far this has progressed was unclear as at 2016.

The drop in oil price since 2013,⁴¹ the death of President Chávez that same year, and the ensuing political and economic turmoil in Venezuela, led to a reasonable concern over the future of PetroCaribe. In 2014, the IMF projected that were PetroCaribe to be discontinued it would result in the loss of 1.6% of GDP of member states (*Caribbean News Now* 2014c). Venezuela attempted to reassure members that PetroCaribe would continue, with President Maduro stating so in a 2015 PetroCaribe meeting (*Caribbean News Now* 2015a; Smith 2014). The greatest concern, however, was that Venezuela would call in these loans earlier than expected (*Caribbean News Now* 2015a). By 2014, PetroCaribe members had a total debt of US\$14.5 billion; however, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Nicaragua together accounted for US\$10 billion of this amount. In 2015, the Dominican Republic paid half of its US\$4 billion debt by selling government bonds and Venezuela cancelled the rest (*Caribbean News Now* 2014b); Jamaica also repaid its debt through a buy-back of the loan (Porzecanski and Lopez 2015). Indebtedness is a persistent problem for the Caribbean and PetroCaribe's role in adding to this is a cause for concern (Sanders 2008); the terms of the loan may be softer than some, but this is still debt that must be repaid. But, as was stated in regards to St Lucia, the responsibility of this primarily lies with the members who go into this arrangement with eyes wide open: "At the end of the day the government must look at what is in the best interest of our country ... the management of the funds is critical" (Int.#50.SL). It is understandable that while Venezuela continues to offer oil at better terms than otherwise available, the small energy-dependent islands of the Caribbean will continue accepting this assistance.

Despite significant flaws and continual concern over both ALBA and PetroCaribe's likely longevity, these two SSC frameworks had remarkable impact on the region's social progress over this time: between 2005 and 2012, the average HDI of ALBA members states rose from 0.658 to 0.721 (ALBA-PTA 2014); while that of

⁴¹ Venezuela advocated for reducing supply in OPEC in order to keep the oil price high; however, this was rejected by the powerful Middle Eastern members that had more capacity to withstand a drop in price (Sanders 2014b).

PetroCaribe members rose from 0.65 in 2005 to 0.70 in 2014 (PetroCaribe 2014b).⁴² They also served as effective demonstrations of the benefits and potential of SSC, as well as promoting the norms that embody this new type of cooperation.

Venezuela's norm leader – President Chávez

It is difficult to discuss Venezuela over this period without discussing the pivotal role of Hugo Chávez. A member of Venezuela's poorer class, Chávez grew up in relative poverty before joining the military and being exposed to radical leftist ideas (Carroll 2013). Chávez became somewhat of a myth and a legend; he was undoubtedly charismatic and had the ability to capture the imagination of those around him. Chávez also actively presented himself as the sole communicator for the government and fostered personal connections to the people – for example, his television show “Aló Presidente” allowed him to be visible and accessible to the public on a regular basis (Carroll 2013). Using such methods ensured that even when the government was out of favour, Chávez remained popular (Reid 2007). He also drew strong correlation between himself and the revolution – to attack the man was to attack the country (Panizza 2009). Chávez was as much a champion of his country as he was a liability – his explosive personality led to aggressive rhetoric and inappropriate outbursts that undermined his credibility in the international realm (Cannon 2009). However, his lack of propriety when dealing with international leaders was not always disliked, and made him somewhat of a curious figure to many people (Carroll 2013). As such, Chávez became one of the most divisive figures of the early 21st century:

“For his supporters, he has radically democratized Venezuelan society, improving the lot of the poor, giving voice to the excluded and promoting direct democracy from below. For his opponents, he is an elected autocrat who has destroyed liberal democracy and used the country's oil wealth to promote a megalomaniac project of personalistic rule.” (Panizza 2009, 206)

One of the greatest problems of Chávez's rule was his belief that he would be able to hold onto power for many years and so built a revolution that was highly dependent on his presence (Carroll 2013). Hence when he was diagnosed with cancer both he and the country were caught off-guard, and his death in 2013 spelled great uncertainty for the future of the Bolivarian Revolution. The 2013 elections saw the victory of his chosen successor, Nicolás Maduro, by the smallest

⁴² While not conclusive and it would be difficult to suggest a causative link between the impact of ALBA/PetroCaribe and increased HDI, these numbers are indicative of a move in a positive direction over this period.

margin in Venezuela's history of just 50.66% of the vote (Lopez 2013). By the time of Chávez's death, however, circumstances in Venezuela were already shifting, and Maduro was faced with the continuing challenges of violent crime, falling oil prices, a failing economy and growing discontent as shown through a string of protests. Maduro found himself in a difficult position – changes were desperately needed but he couldn't risk losing the support of loyal Chavistas (International Crisis Group 2014). By 2016, Venezuela was caught in a downward spiral, economically and politically, and had become increasingly autocratic in the government's attempts to maintain control.

As with President Lula, Chávez had a personal drive to see his country play a more influential role in the region and beyond, and was eager to implement social changes for the benefit of the poor. He therefore became a passionate leader in the expansion of SSC norms. Chávez took this far further than Lula, however. His vision included more than simple cooperation on development projects; Chávez sought global structural change. His message was heavily ideological and idealistic, but at its core embodied the same principles as SSC overall – respect for sovereignty, solidarity and partnership. In this way, Venezuela and Chávez were SSC norm leaders alongside Brazil and Lula. However, Venezuela's role as a norm leader suffered from the same problems as Brazil – the mission was too personalised and had trouble outliving its leader. Add this to the economic and political turmoil that engulfed the country after Chávez's death and Venezuela's attempts at becoming a long-term SSC leader looked destined to fail, although it certainly made its mark during the Chávez years.

Different but complementary visions of SSC

While Brazil and Venezuela may appear to have had competing regional visions expressed through different regional organisations, overall the two countries had amicable relations during the period 2005–2016 and Chávez and Lula were said to have a close friendship (French 2010). The two nations clearly differed in both domestic and foreign policies – Venezuela was more ideological and focused on the region, whereas Brazil was more pragmatic and sought global recognition (Borges 2007). However, the two were united in attempting to keep the US at bay, forming links with emerging powers and establishing regional organisations. That ALBA and UNASUR/MERCOSUR coexisted, and that Venezuela was a member of all three groups, showed that Latin America was able to peacefully promote different visions simultaneously (Linares 2011). Brazil and Venezuela also cooperated on bilateral

projects – for example, they worked together on energy integration with the launch of a joint petrochemical plant (Riggirozzi 2011). However, there were occasional clashes between the two nations due to their different agendas and approaches. Buxton (2010) explained how Venezuela was highly critical of Brazil's role in MINUSTAH, which it described as undemocratic interference in the sovereign affairs of Haiti. That said, generally Brazil and Venezuela were allies in the region and supportive of the other's agendas.

In regards to SSC activities, while sharing the same underlying principles, Brazil and Venezuela showed significant differences in approach. First, Brazil focused on non-financial assistance in the form of technical cooperation agreements. In contrast, Venezuela's assistance was frequently in the form of loans or grants or rather expensive social projects, all funded by the country's oil wealth. Both were needed and appreciated by partner states; however, by focusing on non-financial cooperation Brazil was not constrained by economic conditions to the same extent as Venezuela, which was tied to the value of oil and the ability of the government to manage its funds. As such, Brazilian SSC had the potential to continue indefinitely; Venezuelan SSC, on the hand, seemed to have an inevitable expiry date. Secondly, Brazilian SSC was intrinsically connected to Brazil's foreign policy goals – that is, expanded international influence and commercial interest. As these goals had lasting value (even if they might be reprioritised), SSC would always have some role to play in achieving them. Venezuelan SSC, however, was heavily ideological and strongly connected to Chávez's personal mission – therefore it may have trouble maintaining its relevance under new leaders and ideologies. Thirdly, Brazil's message was more moderate and so had the potential to gain a wider band of followers; Venezuela's message, however, was more radical and so would always be off-putting to some groups (that said, its followers were likely to be more passionate due to its radical nature). Finally, Brazil's SSC programmes tended to be *ad hoc*, decentralised and usually provided at the request of another state; further, its cooperation department, the ABC, had administrative restraints and suffered from continuity issues. Venezuela, on the other hand, had a highly structured system of engaging in SSC through ALBA and PetroCaribe, and provided options to members that were available and ready to be implemented. However, these organisations also had structural problems, including a centralised and slow process of approval.

Overall, it seemed Venezuela may have burned brightest but ultimately its SSC programmes and message was a house of cards built by a now absent leader and

plagued by economic mismanagement. Brazil, on the other hand, proved to be more of a slow burn that had the potential to have a real impact on the future of SSC but perhaps didn't pick up enough steam before circumstances changed. However, during the period 2005–2016, both countries emerged as SSC norm leaders within Latin America.

CHAPTER 3

THE TOOLS OF PERSUASION: TRACKING SSC RHETORIC AND POLICY

This chapter explores how the SSC norm regime may be viewed as a response to Northern development discourse and explains how SSC used rhetorical persuasion to create shared meanings in the field of development cooperation. It first provides a brief discussion of the origins of Northern development discourse and how it shaped relations between the North and South. The chapter provides grounded textual analysis of key documents of the Northern-led development sphere, focusing on the 21st century policies that recent SSC policies (and action) stand alongside and against. While recognising that development cooperation has wide and varying interpretations and that there are significant differences between the rhetoric and practices of states' aid programmes, this research focuses on the policies of the OECD DAC as representative of Northern donors, as well as the relevant UN policies that, while predominantly Northern-led, provided a more inclusive approach. The emphasis is on the aid effectiveness and global partnership agendas as the relevant policies impacting on 21st century SSC discourse. The origins and evolution of SSC discourse are then explored, and some key documents examined. Select foreign policy documents of Brazil and Venezuela are subsequently examined in turn to show how these two norm leaders translated the broader SSC norm regime and its principles into a persuasive message founded on their own national agendas.

The construction of Northern development discourse: Charity and division

“Development in its manifold editions has been *the* best seller of the late twentieth century, a best seller that we all inhabit, a best-seller read in many different ways and for many different ends.” (Mills 1999, 109)

As discussed in Chapter 1, this research adopts a constructivist approach to understanding SSC, specifically how rhetoric and language have been used both to shape a norm regime and to persuade others to become norm followers. While constructivism provides a theoretical approach as to how meaning is created, discourse analysis looks more closely at how power relations and hegemony are established through the use of language and imagery (Milliken 1999). As such, development discourse and rhetoric play a significant role in both the practice and

understanding of international development cooperation in three ways. First, as discussed in Chapter 1, norms define the appropriate behaviour of states. Hence development norms establish a benchmark for comparison and a standard to which the practice of cooperation can be held. Secondly, the discourse describes the anticipated relationships between the parties participating in the cooperation – language is particularly important here as it, intentionally or not, tends to define the power relations of the exchange. Thirdly, development rhetoric is a persuasive mechanism to encourage support of the norm regime, especially where practical demonstration may be lacking. This is significant for the SSC norm regime as, despite having a long discursive history, its practice was still relatively new at the time of research. Unlike long-time Northern donors, Southern donors had the advantage of presenting their discourse and policies into a much less crowded critical space, untainted by past experience – albeit one that was, and continues to be, rapidly filled. As such, SSC in general and Southern donors specifically could be idealistic in their discourse without the fear of being labeled insincere or hypocritical based on previous experiences of partner countries, at least during its early stages.

Studies on development discourse have primarily focused on the gap between the discourse and practice of development, as well as the creation of binary divisions and stereotyping. Many authors within the critical literature of Northern aid have explained how Northern development discourse formed an image of the world where there are donors and recipients, developed and developing, rich and poor; where the South is portrayed as helpless, passive and traditional, and the North as their enlightened saviour (Apthorpe 1986; Kapoor 2008; Olivier de Sardan 2005; Naylor 2011; Nair 2013). Payne (2005) discussed this persistent division and the semantic changes that attempted to soften these distinctions (eg the move from First World/Third World to developed/developing to North/South); however, ultimately all have fallen short of depicting the complexities of global geography and politics. Mawdsley (2012a) examined foreign aid through the lens of gift theory and how aid reinforced this hierarchy in power relations by emphasising aid as charity. Indeed, that Northern development assistance was coined as “foreign aid” rather than cooperation is indicative of these divisions; rhetorically, at least, the parties were never intended to be equal.

The rhetoric of aid as being based on moral duty has become a powerful persuasive tool of multilateral institutions and national governments (Riddell 2007). This

morality can be traced back to Christian principles, such as “love thy neighbour”,⁴³ which tends to connect it with concepts of charity (as well as righteousness); however, it can also be found in more modern rights-based approaches, such as Sen’s basic freedoms (Sen 2001). Appealing to a sense of moral duty, however, has been critiqued as a way to cover other motivations, such as political,⁴⁴ economic,⁴⁵ and security concerns.⁴⁶ While these concerns are legitimate and aid has always been linked to national foreign policy in one way or another, the discourse has tended to shy away from making these the central tenets, instead appealing to more abstract ideas of morality, duty and wellbeing. This is not always the case, however, and appeals to national security are now part of the justification for aid.⁴⁷

Critics of the DAC-led development discourse emphasise its binary North-South divisions and how it established hegemony in this field during the course of the 20th century:⁴⁸

“Development discourse defines a space in which only certain things can be said in certain ways by certain people – a set of mutually reinforcing linguistic forms, propositions and assumptions which make it difficult to see or depict the world in alternative ways.” (Dahl 1999, 16)

Apthorpe (1986) explained that this was done through a form of “teleological willing”, that development policy first identified the solutions then stated the problems to suit, rather than the other way around (see also Nair 2013). This is discussed further below in relation to the origins of Northern development

⁴³ See King James Bible, Mark 12:31.

⁴⁴ Political concerns include retaining influence in former colonial states (see Maizels and Nissanke 1984; Alesina and Dollar 2000; Pacquement 2010) and encouraging democratisation (see Hjertholm and White 2000; Bearce and Tirone 2010). However, it has also been found that, particularly in regards to encouraging democracy, the rhetoric either hasn’t reflected the reality of where donor money has been sent (see Easterly and Williamson 2011) or has been ineffective (see Radelet 2006; Matthews 2008).

⁴⁵ Economic concerns include opening markets and expanding trade and investment opportunities (see Maizels and Nissanke 1984; Petras 1997; Hopkins 2000; Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2003; Tingley 2010; Easterly and Williamson 2011).

⁴⁶ Security concerns have become a larger part of development discourse and practice, especially since the 9/11 attacks (see Alesina and Dollar 2000; Thérien 2002; Lancaster 2007).

⁴⁷ For example, the mission statement of USAID is as follows: “We partner to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity” (USAID 2016).

⁴⁸ Post-development theory has provided some of the harshest critiques. For post-developmentalists, development has not only failed to fulfil the promise of progress and assistance but it has been damaging to the people it aimed to help (see Escobar 1995; Ramonet 1997; Illich 1997; Shanin 1997; Stites Mor 2013). Post-development in turn has its critics (see Corbridge 1998; Mills 1999; Dahl 1999; Pieterse 2000; Olivier de Sardan 2005; McGregor 2007).

discourse. Further, hegemony has been maintained through the creation and utilisation of the DAC as “the moral book-keeper” of development, it sets the rules of the game (Kapoor 2008). In this way, the DAC in particular (and the UN to a lesser extent) fulfilled the role of the organisational framework within which the Northern development norm regime could be situated and promoted.

Hence, in order to analyse the discourse and norm regime of South-South cooperation, there must first be an examination of what it is reacting against and drawing contrast to – that is, the official discourse and policy of Northern donor countries and the international development community. The following section therefore briefly looks at one of the origins of Northern development discourse before looking specifically at policies of the OECD DAC and relevant UN documents. As noted above, the focus here is on 21st century policies, specifically the DAC aid effectiveness agenda and the UN global partnership agenda; this is due to the fact that SSC, while referencing past errors, has to be able to stand up to current policy if it is to be viewed as a genuine alternative moving forward, not only in comparison to the past. It must also be acknowledged that the DAC and UN have made significant strides over the past decade or so to rectify perceived problems and become more inclusive. The focus on the DAC and the UN as two prime examples of Northern development discourse is due to their leading status within the development regime and that they are the main consensus builders in the field. Obviously, the foreign policy of member states includes a wide array of variations; however, the policy of these two organisations are meant to act as guidelines and benchmarks, and as such the “general” discourse of development assistance resides in these policies. While the DAC is representative of the Northern-dominated approach to development assistance (as it includes most major Northern donors), the UN, on the other hand, while heavily influenced by powerful Northern nations, includes voices from both the North and South and as such has its own rhetoric that differs in some ways from the DAC. SSC tends to draw its strongest comparisons to the DAC discourse; however, it has also sought to set itself apart from the UN discourse rather than being absorbed by it. As such, SSC discourse needs to be read against both DAC and UN policies.

The origin of “development”

The official beginning of the call for “development” can be credited to President Truman’s Inaugural Address of 1949, specifically what came to be known as “Point 4”. While there were instances of international development cooperation prior to

this,⁴⁹ Truman's speech marked the beginning of "development" as a pursuit. Perhaps more importantly, however, this public and enduring speech established a new way of thinking about the world and sparked a discourse that would prove influential for decades to come:

"Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

More than half of the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of the people...

I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life...

Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens...

Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies: hunger, misery, and despair." (Truman 1949, reproduced in Rist 2008, 71)

This speech includes a number of rhetorical phrases and ideas that would prove very difficult to shake over the course of the century. The first is that this speech effectively drew a line through the world – there were now the "developed" nations and the "underdeveloped" nations. Truman goes on to describe these underdeveloped nations and the people who live in them – terms such as "victims", "inadequate", "misery", "primitive", "suffering", "handicapped" are used; they want "a better life". The poor are thus depicted as helpless, lacking the skills and resources to develop themselves. Their poverty is described as a "threat", not only to their wellbeing but also to those in the North (Truman is linking poverty to the threat of communism in this instance).

One of the most significant aspects of this speech is that it identified a problem – poverty and underdevelopment – as well as its solution – democracy and economic/material progress. Further, it identified the source of this solution – the

⁴⁹ Christian missionaries and church-affiliated organisations had been setting up schools and hospitals in colonial nations since the late 1800s (Riddell 2007). Colonialism itself has also been viewed as a type of foreign aid (see Easterly 2006; Rist 2008).

North (developed nations), which can act as both the helper and the model for development. While this speech is indicative of its time and place and is framed by post-war ideas and Cold War rhetoric, it established a discourse that would persist through global events, changing agendas and a variety of development concepts – that is, a world divided into the rich and the poor, a duty that the rich should help the poor, and that it has the know-how to do so.

Development practice went through many policy shifts through the second half of the 20th century that reflected this attempt by the North to “develop” the South. However, while significant strides were made in tackling poverty, it seemed that Truman’s proposed solution to the problem of poverty and underdeveloped nations was not as easy to implement as it was to declare. The 1980s resulted in a “lost decade of development” and saw poverty rates rise once more due to crippling debt and structural adjustment packages that resulted in under-funded, or cancelled, public services in the South (Thorbecke 2000). As such, the beginning of the 21st century saw a renewed commitment to global development in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); however, these were somewhat overshadowed by security concerns as a response to the 9/11 attacks on the US in 2001 and economic turmoil in the North due to the GFC of 2008. Meanwhile, the emerging powers, particularly China, India and Brazil, were gaining strength and began to engage in development assistance via a renewed commitment to SSC, which manifested itself in documents such as the *Nairobi Resolution* (discussed below). As such, Northern donors (and discourse) responded to these changes by reassessing their own policies and the language used to describe development practices and relations. It is to these 21st century policies that we now turn.

OECD DAC policy and rhetoric – Donors seeking willing recipients

The original Development Assistance Committee was formed in 1960 with the mandate to coordinate and direct the provision of resources to less developed states to assist them in their development. In many ways, the overarching policy of the DAC has remained in place since that time – for example, “aid effectiveness”, which is central to 21st century DAC policy, was part of its 1961 Resolution of the Common Aid Effort (OECD 2006). However, policy priorities and practices have shifted significantly in response to changing conditions and past experiences. The DAC had 29 members as of 2016, all part of the Global North and classified as donor countries. The current policy and discourse of the DAC can be found in the

2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD 2009) and the *2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation* (OECD 2011), discussed below.

As its name suggests, the *2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* was aimed at making aid from donor countries more effective and to implement reforms to this effect (OECD 2009). There was acknowledgement that the amount of aid must increase and performance improve. This would be achieved through better coordination amongst donors, aligning priorities of donors and partners, a focus on good governance and a renewed commitment to strict M&E. The Declaration had a heavy emphasis on results, targets and indicators, with accountability being on both the donor and partner country to achieve progress. In line with this, the document was highly technocratic and the language was impersonal and removed from the people it aimed to assist. For example, the opening statement referred to the “achievement of the MDGs” as the purpose of these reforms, as well as improving “development performance”; the human connection was absent.

The language used to describe the parties involved in the cooperation was also revealing – the terms “donors” and “partners” were used throughout the document. This was an attempt to avoid the word “recipient”; however, the meaning and connotations were essentially the same, especially considering “donor” is more naturally paired with “recipient” than “partner” in English. It is notable also that this document continually referred to “aid”, not cooperation; partners cooperate, donors give aid – the document was semantically dissonant. Partnership also implies trust, which feels absent in this document. For example, under “Managing for Results”, it stated:

“Donors commit to:

- Link country programming and resources to results and align them with effective partner country performance assessment frameworks, refraining from requesting the introduction of performance indicators that are not consistent with partners’ national development strategies.
- Work with partner countries to rely, as far as possible, on partner countries’ results-oriented reporting and monitoring frameworks.
- Harmonise their monitoring and reporting requirements, and, until they can rely more extensively on partner countries’ statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems, with partner countries to the maximum extent possible on joint formats for periodic reporting.” (OECD 2009, para 45)

These points betray the partnership and trust the document was trying to convey by suggesting in the first point that donors should “refrain” from requesting unwanted

indicators (rather than forbidding it more strongly), using an escape clause in the second point of “as far as possible” in regards to trusting partner reporting, and then stating outright that partner monitoring cannot be relied on in the third point. This underlying lack of trust and respect for sovereignty for “partners” in a document that was meant to promote ownership and alignment did not go unnoticed, with *The Guardian* stating: “[Ownership] is measured by a World Bank team looking through the recipient countries' policy documents and deciding whether or not they have long term strategies – it could hardly be more patronising” (Glennie 2011). A further problem was that, while there was much talk of “mutual accountability”, there was no talk of mutual exchange or benefit (or indeed that partner countries could contribute anything of value for the donor). Further, there was little acknowledgement of differences amongst partner countries, especially in their capacity to carry out such exhaustive monitoring of projects. The document also had a sense of universal application of approach to development even as it sought to turn away from this idea.

The *2008 Accra Agenda for Action* provided the response to these practical and discursive shortcomings in the Paris Declaration (see OECD 2009 for text). The Agenda therefore included an emphasis on partnership, genuine ownership by developing countries and transparency. Indicative of this was the increased use of “cooperation” within the document. Interestingly, while there was a renewed focus on partnership, the term “partners” was dropped in this document in favour of “developing countries”; however, the term “donor” remained, highlighting that genuine partnership may still be some way off. The Agenda also recognised the role of SSC, acknowledging its value and differences while simultaneously encouraging donors to follow the aid effectiveness principles of the DAC:

“a) We encourage all development actors, including those engaged in South-South co-operation, to use the Paris Declaration principles as a point of reference in providing development co-operation.

b) We acknowledge the contributions made by all development actors, and in particular the role of middle-income countries as both providers and recipients of aid. We recognise the importance and particularities of South-South co-operation and acknowledge that we can learn from the experience of developing countries.

...

e) South-South co-operation on development aims to observe the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, equality among developing partners and respect for their independence, national sovereignty, cultural diversity and identity and local content. It plays an important role in international development co-operation and is a valuable complement to North-South co-operation.” (OECD 2009, para 19)

Thus, unlike the Paris Declaration, point (b) of the Accra Agenda acknowledged that Southern nations may have experience of value both to the North and the South. The mention of SSC as a “valuable complement” to North-South cooperation also suggests that SSC may reduce the burden on Northern donors – thus increasing its value to the North, especially in light of the financial crisis emerging at the time.

The next pivotal document was the *2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-Operation*, which was a further attempt to respond to the problems of the aid effectiveness agenda and to herald in an era of “inclusive partnership” (see OECD 2011 for text). A lead-up document to Busan acknowledged the impressive effort made by developing countries to improve their institutional capacity but showed the ultimate lack of trust that donors had in these supposed “partners”:

“Despite this hard-won progress, evidence shows that the improved systems put in place by the developing countries are not necessarily used by donors to deliver aid. In many cases, fear of financial misuse and lack of faith in partner country systems has prompted donors to avoid fiduciary risk altogether, rather than managing it.” (Abdel-Malek and Koenders 2011)

The Busan Partnership was therefore an attempt to bring all countries together, including the new Southern donors as well as all recipient nations, and to be:

“united by a new partnership that is broader and more inclusive than ever before, founded on shared principles, common goals and differential commitments for effective international development.” (OECD 2011, para 1)

The language from the outset was less technocratic than the 2005 Declaration and recognised the contributions of all parties as well as the historical legacy of division:

“Openness, trust, and mutual respect and learning lie at the core of effective partnerships in support of development goals, recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors.” (OECD 2011, para 11(c))

The document also dropped the use of the word “donor”, which revealed a strong rhetorical statement on the new status of the parties to this inclusive partnership. However, recipients were still referred to as “developing countries”, and because there was no term to replace “donor” the gap seemed to be filled by the use of the first person plural “we” – that is, the writers of the document, who must therefore be the Northern donors (considering this was a DAC document, and all DAC members are donors) rather than all parties on both sides of the exchange. Likewise, while the language was different and the rhetoric more inclusive, the principles and courses

of action were still recognisable as being grounded in the 2005 Declaration, and hence this was a new spin on the old policy rather than a new approach.

SSC was also discussed; however, although Southern donors such as Brazil and China signed up to this document, their compliance to the aid effectiveness principles was on a voluntary basis only. One of the greatest impacts SSC had on DAC discourse, as shown in the Busan Partnership, was in the acknowledgement that developing countries had knowledge to share and thereby the term “mutual learning” came into play. While not quite the “mutual benefit” principle of SSC, it showed the relevance of the emerging powers to the development field and how they were starting to shape the broader discussions of development cooperation, even in the Northern-dominated DAC.

UN development policy and rhetoric – Attempts at bridging the North-South divide

While the DAC struggled to become more inclusive, whether through the rhetoric or the practice of development, the UN has always had a more open and cooperative element. This is due mostly to the fact that the DAC has a closed membership restricted to OECD donor states; the UN, however, is comprised of both the North and the South and recognises the validity of all nations.⁵⁰ Their approaches to development therefore differ, and the rhetoric reflects this. The policies of the DAC and UN do not exist apart from each other, however; rather, each references the policies of the other, and especially over the past two decades they have become more closely aligned. For example, the DAC 2005 Paris Declaration was made in recognition of the MDGs (OECD 2009, see para 1) – a UN policy. Likewise, the 2011 Busan Partnership was reflected in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (see Goal 17). However, the UN, via the *Millennium Declaration 2000* (UN General Assembly 2000) and the *2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development* (UN General Assembly 2015), discusses development and relations between parties in a particular way that differs from that of the DAC; hence, although it reflects DAC development discourse in some ways, it also addresses some of the discursive flaws of DAC policy.

⁵⁰ This is not to say there are no unequal power relations at play in the UN – the economically and militarily stronger states tend to have a greater voice than the smaller, comparatively weaker states. The UNSC is the most pertinent example of this, which includes only five permanent members – China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US – which also have veto power (UN Charter, Art 27). This list has not changed since the establishment of the UN in 1945. Due to the global changes that have occurred since that time, it is understandable that countries such as Brazil (as discussed in Chapter 2) have lobbied to include more permanent members in order to better reflect current conditions.

The *2000 Millennium Declaration*, the document that outlined the MDGs, opened with a rededication of all member states to the pursuit of peace, justice, freedom and equality for the good of all, “especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs” (UN General Assembly 2000, para 2). The language is noticeably more rhetorical and personal than DAC policy, appealing to a sense of moral responsibility and human compassion. It also recognised the causes of inequality rather than focusing solely on disconnected solutions, and noted that while globalisation has afforded benefits to some, it has also been the root of division, stating: “For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed” (UN General Assembly 2000, para 5). The notion of development was discussed in a much broader sense and focused more on principles and grand statements rather than practical action points. Likewise, there was discussion of not just financial aid and assistance but the need to reform international trade, address environmental issues and distinguish between the needs of certain types of countries (eg island states, landlocked countries etc). The document was particularly strong on self-determination due to the UN’s central tenet of national sovereignty, an aspect that is missing from DAC documents in any overt form. Likewise, the language of solidarity was adopted:

“Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.”
(UN General Assembly 2000, para 6)

The MDGs themselves were people-centred and ambitious; they focused on specific human problems associated with poverty rather than a more vague idea of development and how to finance it (a significant difference between the UN and DAC). There was a strong sense of “we’re all in this together”, an appropriate sentiment for the world’s most inclusive multilateral organisation, and as such achieved a greater sense of partnership than the DAC documents even though it didn’t force the principle as strongly.

The Declaration resisted using donor/recipient language, instead opting for terms such as “developing countries”, “industrialised countries”, “more advanced countries”, the “less fortunate”/“more fortunate”. The 2001 *Road Map towards the Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration* (UN General Assembly 2001), however, used the term “donor”, although “recipient” was not used. The very nature of the UN as an inclusive and open organisation seemed to make partnership

and cooperation easier sentiments to capture in the discourse, even where the semantics proved difficult.

While the UN MDGs and the discourse surrounding it was more inclusive than DAC policy, it still suffered from some shortcomings as far as Southern sensibilities were concerned. The first is that the MDGs only applied to developing countries, and hence a line was drawn between the North and South despite the emphasis on working together. Secondly, the onus was more on the South to solve the problem of poverty within its borders, with the North expected to assist but not required to look inward itself. Thirdly, while the goals were ambitious, they were also somewhat idealistic and hence while progress was made on all of the indicators not many of the goals were fully achieved (UN 2015).⁵¹ The *2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development* (UN General Assembly 2015) – the document that established the SDGs – was thereby written with these concerns in mind.

Hence the SDGs were created not just for some countries but *all* countries: “These are universal goals and targets which involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike” (UN General Assembly 2015, para 5). In this sense it adopted the global partnership agenda of the DAC and attempted to break down division. However, the vision was broader than the Busan Partnership and the language more inspiring. It used rhetorical devices of repetition, imagery and grand statements to usher in this new era of global development:

“We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We envisage a world free of fear and violence. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured...” (UN General Assembly 2015, para 7)

The language was inclusive, emphasising partnership, solidarity and sovereignty, and included the ideas of “win-win cooperation” (UN General Assembly 2015, para 18) as well as “shared responsibility” (UN General Assembly 2015, para 36). Despite this, there is still the use of the terms “developed” and “developing countries”, although donor and recipient are absent. In acknowledgement of the need for more measurable goals and effective M&E (also reminiscent of DAC policy), following an extensive consultation process, the SDGs expanded to a rather cumbersome 17 goals and 169 targets. Whether this complexity makes them more achievable is yet to be seen.

⁵¹ For an overview of the criticism towards the MDGs, see Fehling et al 2013.

While the DAC and UN rhetoric had significant differences, both contained the norms of global division and Northern dominance that defined Northern development discourse over this time, albeit to varying degrees. This reflected the practical reality behind the aid effectiveness Agenda of the DAC and the UN MDGs – they were based primarily on a North-South flow of assistance and therefore were built largely on difference and inequality rather than similarity. The DAC, with its technocratic language and lack of trust in Southern “partners”, reflected this reality more strongly than the UN – this was likely due to the fact that both the writers and readers of the documents were Northern donors and in many ways did not need to be more inclusive. The UN, on the other hand, made better attempts at inclusive terms and emotive rhetoric, but these were not enough to hide the inherent divisions in the project. The move towards inclusivity in policy if not in practice over this time was valuable, but a better sense of rhetorical equality between North and South is likely still a long ways off – as shown in the fact that there was a continual need to distinguish between the donor/recipient or the developed/developing in each policy.

It is notable that both the DAC and the UN over the course of these policies began to utilise more strongly the rhetoric of SSC, especially the emphasis on partnership. Whether this was due to the growing presence of SSC is unclear, although the fact that SSC began to be noted in these documents suggests it made some impact, particularly in the UN where the Southern voice is louder. While it is positive that SSC rhetoric has become more embedded in Northern development discourse there is a danger of its language being co-opted without the action and rendering SSC irrelevant. As discussed in Chapter 1, this is a challenge for new norms and can lead to their failure (Krook and True 2012). Over the period of study, however, SSC established itself as an alternative form of development cooperation for the Global South, in large part by distinguishing itself from Northern development discourse and its underlying norms of division and dominance.

The discourse of South-South cooperation: Solidarity and similarity

While there has been much discussion of the discourse of Northern-led development assistance (as discussed above), there has been relatively little on South-South cooperation. This is due to its novelty (or at least its new energy) and as such much attention has focused instead on understanding this new phase of SSC and how it fits in to the global order rather than on the nuances of policy

rhetoric. Emma Mawdsley is one exception to this and has examined the discourse of SSC as a tool to identify the differences between North-South aid and SSC. Mawdsley found that SSC has strong underpinnings that have resonance in the South, and that these revolve around the principles that have come to define SSC relations and operations. Hence, just as Northern aid has a strong and deep connection to charity and morality, as noted in Chapter 1, “the discursive construction of Southern development assistance as being based on solidarity and mutual respect has a genuine and meaningful hold on Southern imaginaries” (Mawdsley 2012b, 162). The emphasis of SSC has therefore been on partnership, not charitable duty, and is in many ways a response to the perceived problems in Northern-led development discourse of division and inequality. This is not to say that SSC does not have hierarchy or division – there are of course significant power imbalances between countries. However, the discourse has proven effective in reinforcing a Southern identity and solidarity that, as Mawdsley said, is meaningful, and that has formed the foundation of the SSC norm regime.

The origins of SSC discourse

The intellectual history of SSC is long, and the discourse existed long before substantive action. The Communiqué of the *Asian African Conference of Bandung 1955* contains the first official statement/commitment of Southern nations attempting to cooperate (Asian-African Conference 1955). The Conference aimed to bring together the newly independent states of Africa and Asia⁵² to assert that independence, as well as the right of all nations to self-determination. Colonialism was therefore condemned and it was demanded that all those still under colonial rule be freed. Further, there was also a request that the UN Security Council be expanded to include developing countries, an issue that would continue without success until present day.

The conference was very much a product of its time; it was framed by the colonial era that was drawing to an end and the Cold War era that was intensifying. It also was a pre-cursor to the NAM, which demonstrated the South’s desire to remain neutral in regards to the two superpowers of the US and the USSR. The focus therefore was first and foremost on respecting the sovereignty of all nations, especially those of the South that had been (or were still) denied this right. The

⁵² As the name implies, no states from Latin America or the Caribbean participated in the conference. However, Brazil was granted observer status.

means to assert this sovereignty was by cooperating with each other for the benefit of all, according to the following principles:

“Free from mistrust and fear, and with confidence and goodwill towards each other, nations should practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours and develop friendly co-operation on the basis of the following principles:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations large and small.
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
- ...
9. Promotion of mutual interests and co-operation.” (Asian-African Conference 1955, para G)

The language of this declaration differs significantly from Truman’s 1949 speech by emphasising “goodwill”, “tolerance”, “neighbourly relations” and “friendly co-operation”, rather than division and fear. It is a hopeful document, and uses positive persuasion rather than drawing on negative imagery. The rhetoric of the document describes a group of nations that are able and willing to carve out a prosperous future for their people, and therefore does not reflect the impoverished, miserable and helpless masses that Truman described. These Southern countries were attempting to create a new way of working together based on respect for each other and for national sovereignty. The principles quoted above – sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit – established the basis of SSC discourse moving forward, and thereby display the continuity of SSC norms. The reference to respect for the UN Charter also shows SSC’s early and ongoing connection to UN processes above other international systems (eg the Bretton Woods institutions). The emphasis of the cooperation was on exchange of technical knowledge rather than transfers of wealth (due to obvious practical limitations); however, the impact of Bandung was largely ideological, leading to outcomes such as the NAM rather than to substantial and practical examples of cooperation.

The next important moment in SSC history came 23 years after Bandung in the form of the *Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) 1978* (UN 1978). While the Buenos Aires conference was a UN-wide initiative, a committee of Southern nations

drove the final Plan of Action that was endorsed by the UN. As Bandung, Buenos Aires was reflective of its time – the Cold War was at its peak, North-South development assistance had been tried and tested with mixed results, and there were apparent flaws in the structure and balance of the global order. Hence, part of the opening statement read:

“The resultant Plan is a detailed blueprint for *major changes in approaches to development assistance* and for a dramatically heightened emphasis on *national and collective self-reliance among developing countries* as foundations for a new international economic order.” [emphasis added] (UN 1978, opening statement)

The Plan of Action (BAPA) reiterated much of Bandung but in much stronger terms. It spoke of the problems of the international system that was outdated and did not allow equal rights for all states; it suggested a new order should be established – and thus became an underpinning of the New International Economic Order movement. This demonstrates SSC’s long connection with the aim of establishing a greater role for the South in global affairs, particularly in the form of a multipolar world, which would be fairer for all. It also addressed development assistance explicitly, something that was not fully in action at the time of Bandung. Hence, while criticising the problems with North-South development assistance, it set up a more structured approach to South-South technical cooperation. Note, South-South language was not used in this document; instead, it referred to developing countries working together. The meaning is similar, in that there was a marked difference between the developed and developing nations, and similarity and complementarity amongst the developing nations. In this sense, the document is promoting the idea of a divided world in much the same way as Northern-led development discourse. The difference appears to lie in the emphasis on the sovereignty of all nations, that there should be none above the others and no right to declare superiority.⁵³ As such, sovereignty and equality were once again the cornerstones of this document, as in Bandung:

“TCDC as well as other forms of co-operation among all countries must be based on strict observance of national sovereignty, economic independence, equal rights and non-interference in domestic affairs of nations, irrespective of their size, level of development and social and economic systems.” (UN 1978, para 13)

⁵³ It should be noted that one worries about disappearing down the proverbial rabbit hole of semantics, sometimes words are simply necessary to describe two groups and these are unavoidable. However, there does seem to be a genuine discursive difference in how the North discusses global relations and how the South does, even when the language used is similar.

Solidarity was also appealed to as a “fundamental concept” (UN 1978, para 16). However, it is this document that contained the most expansive notion of mutual benefit that would become strongly attached to SSC moving forwards:

“Recognizing the role of technical co-operation among developing countries for initiating, designing, organizing and promoting co-operation so that developing countries can create, acquire, adapt, transfer and pool knowledge and experience for their mutual benefit and for achieving national and collective self-reliance...”
(UN General Assembly 1978)

The acknowledgement that Southern nations were capable of working together and could be active creators and providers of knowledge and development would become a foundational idea of 21st century SSC and one that held particular resonance with the smaller and less-resourced countries of the South. The call for the South to direct its own development and look to each other for support in the spirit of solidarity was a large part of the legacy of Buenos Aires and why it is still referred to as an important document in SSC. That said, both Bandung and Buenos Aires contained statements that SSC was not designed to take the place of North-South aid, but to complement those relations. This disclaimer was prudent considering at both Bandung and Buenos Aires no Southern countries yet had the capacity to provide financial and/or technical assistance to the extent of the North, and so while this call for the South to forge its own path was important for the intellectual history of SSC, it would still be some time before SSC moved out of the discursive space and gained enough strength to challenge the established order.

21st century SSC discourse

While Buenos Aires was aimed at inspiring Southern nations to work together on technical cooperation, the impact was (again) rather limited. It wasn't until almost 20 years later in 1995 that a UN resolution entitled *New Directions for Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries* was passed to establish a UN High Level Conference on South-South Cooperation in recognition of the need for, and growing activity of, SSC (UN 1995). While this signaled the beginning of a renewed focus on SSC, its impact didn't begin to be felt or reach the levels hoped for in the Bandung and Buenos Aires statements until the early 2000s.

The most notable document at the time of writing regarding SSC came out of the 2009 *High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation*, now known as the *Nairobi Resolution* (UN General Assembly 2010). This document differed from those before it in that it addressed the action of SSC rather than

simply the intentions or hopes of possible SSC. As discussed in Chapter 1, 2009 saw a peak in SSC (and a possible tipping point) as emerging powers such as the BRICS provided development assistance and cooperation to a number of nations in the South and the movement as a whole gained momentum in a way not previously seen; it was also during this year that the first BRICS Summit took place. Hence SSC was no longer merely a largely rhetorical term but a reality and Nairobi was an attempt to recognise this and, in light of Bandung and Buenos Aires, set down some concrete principles that would guide SSC activities moving forwards and also set it apart from Northern-led cooperation:

“... we reaffirm our view of South-South cooperation as a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South... South-South cooperation and its agenda have to be set by countries of the South and should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.” (UN General Assembly 2011, para 11)

Once again, sovereignty and self-determination were front and centre, and mutual benefit was also listed. This right to sovereignty, however, applied not only to how countries should relate to one another, but also to how SSC was framed. This appeared to be a statement therefore that the North had no right or place to be dictating how SSC should be conducted. This may have been a reference to the 2005 Paris Declaration, which (as discussed above) encouraged Southern donors to adopt the aid effectiveness principles – a suggestion that was rejected in this document. Despite this, it was once again stressed that SSC was not intended to replace Northern aid and both should therefore exist in tandem. This reiterated past statements on this topic, but also reflected the policy in the DAC aid effectiveness agenda and global partnership – that is, SSC should be viewed as something separate and different to Northern aid (even if the North would prefer it “come into the fold”, as it were). The implication is therefore that if SSC is to exist outside of the Northern development discourse, as discussed above, then likewise SSC could not expect Northern aid to conform to its principles either (even if that were desired). This concession was not entirely *quid pro quo*, however, as the reality still stood that the South still *needed* Northern assistance and, while growing, SSC at that time was not able to fulfil or significantly reduce this need. Hence, the Northern discourse and SSC had two different motivations for stating the complementary nature of the two cooperation agendas – the North wanted to reduce its burden to support the South, while the South wanted to ensure the North did not abdicate its responsibility.

The *Nairobi Resolution* also emphasised the principles of partnership and solidarity, and adopted the friendly and convivial rhetoric that can be found in Bandung and Buenos Aires (but seemed somewhat lacking in DAC policies):

“We reaffirm that South-South cooperation is a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity, and guided by, inter alia, the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, free from any conditionalities. South-South cooperation should not be seen as official development assistance. It is a partnership among equals based on solidarity.” (UN General Assembly 2010, para 18)

The use of the term “we” referred to countries of the South – thus it mirrored the use of the “we” in the Busan Partnership document that appeared to refer to Northern donors. However, the significant difference here was that there was no antonym to the narrational “we”; the “we” *discusses* “developing countries” and also *is* the “developing countries”. Hence, while the Busan Partnership used “we” to avoid using the term “donor”, it meant the same thing. Whereas, the *Nairobi Resolution* addressed *all* countries of the South to act in cooperation with each other according to these principles, not for some countries (donors) to behave well to some other countries (recipients). This highlights that for SSC, at least in rhetorical terms, there is no distinction made between donors and recipients, just partnership between two parties. This use of language, though small and in many ways practical rather than ideological – combined with the principle of mutual benefit (ie that all countries have something to contribute) as well as the reference to common histories and “sympathies” – effectively gave greater strength to the claims of solidarity, partnership and equality. As explored in later chapters, these principles reinforce each other to form a strong Southern imaginary and a cohesive norm regime, both in rhetoric and practice.

Establishing the SSC norm regime

From Bandung in 1955, the South established a discourse for SSC that would grow in strength and detail over the next 60 years. The early rhetoric was primarily concerned with asserting the South’s right to self-determination and to encourage countries of the South to work together in order both to secure and to exercise this sovereignty. The *Buenos Aires Plan of Action* in 1978 reiterated the right to sovereignty and, in response to the actions of Northern aid, emphasised a more respectful relationship between Southern countries based on mutual benefit. Hence by the time SSC grew in activity due to the rising power and interests of the

emerging economies, the intellectual groundwork of SSC had already been laid. The *Nairobi Resolution* was therefore the opportunity to lay these principles out clearly and solidify the guidelines for this new era of Southern cooperation – thereby establishing the SSC norm regime.

As discussed in Chapter 1 and in light of the SSC documents discussed above, I have identified the following four principles as the building blocks of the SSC norm regime:

- **Solidarity** – the *foundational* principle of SSC. This solidarity refers not to a general sense of goodwill towards all nations (as it does when used in UN documents above), but to a Southern solidarity built on a common history and identity. It is the basis of all SSC activities and relations.
- **Partnership** – the *equality* principle. This partnership is based on countries being seen and treated as equals, and cooperation between them therefore rejects any rhetoric of donors and recipients. In SSC there are only partners, in the same way as there are only Southern countries. All countries are therefore treated with respect, which should be returned.
- **Respect for sovereignty** – the *ownership* principle. This principle refers to a nation's right to self-determination in choosing and directing its development priorities, as well as its right to sovereignty over its domestic affairs. It is expressed through the actions of non-interference and non-conditionality.
- **Mutual benefit** – the *sharing* principle. Both countries should engage in cooperation that includes shared responsibilities and benefits, in the acknowledgement that all countries have valuable knowledge and experiences to transfer.

These principles can be loosely divided into two categories: the relational principles – solidarity and partnership; and the practical principles – respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. While each principle has aspects of both categories, the relational principles refer more specifically to how the countries not only relate but how they are expected to feel towards each other. Hence, it is difficult to point to concrete examples of solidarity and partnership – the participants have to *feel* that these were present. On the other hand, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit have specific practical applications – for example, non-conditionality and tangible outcomes for both sides – although the presence of these will also lead to relational results, such as feeling respected and more equal. In many ways, these principles

emerged as a response and a challenge to the perceived injustices of Northern development cooperation that seemed to encourage the norms of division and dominance between the North and the South. The SSC norm regime was therefore designed to encourage a greater sense of equality and respect – in behaviour, value and treatment.

The SSC principles were recognised and reaffirmed by further meetings of the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation, such as in the report of the 19th session conducted in May 2016, which also recognised the value of UN involvement in this process and especially the UNOSSC (UN General Assembly 2016). While this chapter has discussed SSC as a response to the Northern-led development discourse, including both the DAC and the UN, it must be acknowledged that SSC has long been connected to the UN structure and UN policy tends to be more compatible with SSC rhetoric than does that of the DAC. As noted, the 2016 Meeting referred to the UN documents concerning the MDGs and SDGs as framing the discussion on SSC, but stated that only “some delegations” referenced the aid effectiveness agenda and Busan Partnership (UN General Assembly 2016, para 8). As such, the UN may be viewed as an organisational framework through which the SSC norm regime can be promoted. However, as stated above, there is a danger that should SSC become too embedded in a somewhat Northern-led institution like the UN it may lose its own distinctiveness and relevance in the process.

Despite increased rhetorical similarities to Northern development cooperation, SSC remained committed to its own definitions and principles since Bandung, and over time established a coherent norm regime that moved through the norm origin phase to a tipping point in 2009. To trigger a norm cascade, however, charismatic norm leaders were required to translate these principles into foreign policy and encourage potential norm followers to support SSC. As shown in Chapter 2, Brazil and Venezuela emerged as two Latin American SSC norm leaders during the early 21st century that took up this message with fervour.

Brazilian SSC policy: “Partnership for development”

Under the leadership of President Lula and his Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim, Brazil became a strong advocate for the SSC norm regime as described above, while also forming its own particular approach to development cooperation. Its policy of SSC referenced the *Buenos Aires Plan of Action* and emphasised most ardently the principles of partnership and mutual benefit:

“The concept of ‘*partnership for development*’, adopted by Brazil, consolidates the idea of the cooperative relationship that leads to both sides *sharing efforts and benefits*. The proposed initiatives are evaluated in the light of the impact and scope of the host communities. This procedure involves improving negotiation mechanisms, assessment and management of projects in order to fit them to national priorities.” [emphasis added] (ABC 2016)

Brazil’s emphasis on partnership seemed particularly prudent considering its position in its own region as somewhat of an outlier, as discussed in Chapter 2. Fostering partnership and mutual respect was therefore a way to overcome differences not only of size but of culture and language – two significant points of variance that had acted as a barrier between Brazil and the rest of South America. This also highlighted the message that Brazil was not looking to dominate the region or the South, but to work together for the good of all – it was not a threat. Brazil was also quick to state that Brazil’s use of partnership was not the same as the “partnership” referenced in Northern development discourse:

“Unlike traditional relations of international cooperation, Brazil established partnerships, shared lessons learned and spread knowledge through the use of the Federal Government’s technical staffs who engaged in the understanding, reflection and joint search for solutions to common challenges of development.” (Baumann 2014, 98)

Its partnership was linked with the principles of complementarity and mutual benefit to overcome “common challenges” – a show of Southern similarity that separated it from Northern calls of partnership that are based on difference. Projects of best fit were to be identified in order for both countries to benefit in the exchange. In this way, Brazil could be pragmatic in its SSC; mutual benefit was not something to shy away from (or dismissed as a possibility as in earlier Northern development policies) but celebrated, and as such Brazil was clear about its priorities and ambition to achieve “global player” status, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Amorim 2011, 54). For example, the guidelines for Brazil’s SSC programmes included that it should “prioritize technical cooperation programmes that promote the intensification of relations between Brazil and its developing partners, particularly with the countries of priority interest to Brazil’s foreign policy” (ABC 2016).⁵⁴ Thus SSC was seen as a foreign policy tool for building relationships with regions and nations of interest, which may be one of the varied benefits of engaging in specific SSC programmes.

⁵⁴ For example, the 2016 listed areas of priority included: countries of South America; Haiti; African countries, especially PALOPs (Portuguese-speaking African countries), and Timor-Leste; other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean; and support for the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries). It was not clear whether this was an ordered list.

Former Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim, described Brazil's SSC over this period in this way:

"South-South cooperation is a *diplomatic strategy* that originates from an authentic desire to exercise solidarity toward poorer countries. At the same time, it helps expand Brazil's participation in world affairs. Cooperation among equals in matters of trade, investment, science and technology and other fields reinforces our stature and strengthens our position in trade, finance and climate negotiations. Last but not least, building coalitions with developing countries is also a way of engaging in the reform of global governance in order to make international institutions fairer and more democratic." [emphasis added] (Amorim 2010, 231)

Here Amorim succinctly summarised the essential elements of Brazil's particular take on SSC under President Lula – it was a strategic tool to expand Brazil's international influence, not just for the good of Brazil but for the Global South, based in the spirit of solidarity. Amorim described Brazil's solidarity as "authentic" – that is, not merely words. The framing of this idea with the goal of reforming an unfair global system through coalitions helped to reinforce this sincerity – solidarity would feel emptier if followed only by a description of how Brazil would benefit. Amorim described Brazil's (and more specifically Lula's) solidarity as being based on "non-indifference" towards the plight of poorer nations:

"Such attitude of *non-indifference* is not contradictory with the defence of our own interests. We are convinced that in the long run an attitude based on a sense of humanity that favours the promotion of development of the poorest and most vulnerable will not only be good to peace and prosperity around the world. It will bring benefits to Brazil herself, in political as well as economic terms. This dialectic relation between national interest and the exercise of solidarity has been a fundamental aspect of President Lula's foreign policy." [original emphasis] (Amorim 2010, 225)

Brazil's insistent connection between solidarity, partnership and mutual benefit was an effective means by which to sweep away notions of charity within development assistance and cooperation and to reinforce the idea of the South, and even the poorest nations within it, as having something of value to give and to gain. Thus, even though there was talk in Brazil's policy of "poorer nations" and a sense that despite the call to equality Brazil still held the upper hand, this constant reaffirming of Southern value and significance helped to separate it from Northern donors. Of note, however, was that Brazil was not as clear on the principle of respect for sovereignty as it was on the other three principles of SSC. It was present in terms such as "voluntary participation" (Int.#01.I-Br) and implied in references to partnership, but it was by no means pushed as hard as in general SSC discourse or other national SSC programmes (eg non-interference played a central role in

Venezuelan rhetoric, discussed below). The reasoning for this is unclear, especially as Brazil's programmes tended to reflect a respect for sovereignty and were mostly unconditional, as is discussed in further chapters.

The question of whether Brazil would, in time, conform to the Northern aid regime seemed to be, at least from a rhetorical standpoint, highly unlikely, especially as Brazil was one of the strongest advocates for SSC being considered different to Northern aid and therefore that it should not be subject to the Northern development agenda (such as aid effectiveness etc). For example, in a press release from the 2009 Nairobi Conference, Brazilian representative Maria Sampaio Fernandes was quoted as rejecting any suggestion that SSC should be guided by Northern-led cooperation principles or be seen as on the same path as Northern donors:

“The fact that North-South cooperation [existed before] South-South cooperation does not mean that performance standards observed by the former must automatically apply to the latter,’ she said, adding that South-driven development programmes must not be seen as ‘training’ for developing countries to become donors.” (UN 2009, 7)

For Brazil, SSC was therefore stated as a part of a larger agenda of achieving a more influential role for itself and also for the South, in order to change the global order to reflect current times and balances. Using emotive language, historical imagery and declaring the world as both changed and changing (ie multipolar), Foreign Minister Amorim was incredibly effective at presenting Brazil's (ie Lula's) vision through powerful rhetoric:

“The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the end of the East-West conflict and ushered in a new era. The rise of developing countries is a structural transformation that is knocking down another wall: the North-South wall. It is a thick wall, albeit an invisible one. It is falling apart much more slowly than the Berlin Wall, but falling it is. In this more multipolar, more complex world in which developing countries are no longer passive bystanders, Brazil is willing to play a greater role.” (Amorim 2010, 216)

Under Lula and Amorim, Brazilian SSC reached its peak in both practical and rhetorical terms. President Lula had a clear vision to expand Brazil's international presence and Foreign Minister Amorim showed impressive skill in both carrying out and declaring this goal. Amorim's ability to convey this vision through effective rhetoric and language was an invaluable persuasive tool; he presented an idealised, relational and emotive policy for Brazilian SSC activities and displayed Brazil's clear support, and leadership of, the emerging SSC norm regime. This was framed by the

goal of a better deal for the South, and a rejection of the perceived Northern norms of division and dominance. That SSC was heavily connected to Lula and Amorim's enthusiasm for Brazil to be a norm leader in this arena meant that it inevitably waned under subsequent governments. However, Brazil established a strong SSC policy and language, closely linked with the general SSC norm regime, that provided a solid foundation moving forward.

Venezuelan SSC policy: “Emancipatory” cooperation

Venezuelan policy regarding SSC, particularly at the time of Hugo Chávez, was attached to a broader foreign policy that included ambitions beyond the scope of simple SSC projects. However, for Venezuela this was a grand vision of global change based on “emancipatory, anti-hegemonic and anti-imperialist ideology” (MPPRE 2016). This differed from Brazil's rhetoric concerning a rebalancing of global structures that would allow the South to play a larger role; Venezuela was more aggressive, it described an enemy that must be defeated in order for the South to prosper – US global hegemony. In this way, it described its battle as “anti-imperial”, harking back to colonial struggles that have strong resonance in the South. As such, Venezuela was the only Southern donor to be openly hostile towards Northern aid and insistent that it should be discontinued or radically altered, rather than exist alongside SSC as official SSC discourse consistently reaffirmed (Mawdsley 2012a). Hence the Vision Statement of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs was as follows:

“Being a Ministry formed by a professional human talent and committed to the highest interests of the country, that positions the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as power within the emerging pole representing Latin America and the Caribbean, able to exert influence on high democratization of international relations, in ensuring global peace and the formation of a multicenter multipolar world, free from hegemonic impositions in the social, cultural, environmental, economic and political.” (MPPRE 2016)

Venezuela's discussion of international relations was highly rhetorical and designed to inspire allegiance from those who felt downtrodden in the South. The language was also specific – while Brazil referred to a vague multipolar world, Venezuela declared itself as representative of the Latin American and Caribbean pole and ready to exert influence on the global stage. According to this rhetoric, Venezuela's goals were the goals of the South. Venezuela's broad vision was strongly linked to its integration projects and coalition building rather than a focus on bilateral projects (as was more common in SSC, and particularly Brazilian SSC). As such, the SSC

policy of Venezuela could be found within PetroCaribe and ALBA documents, rather than a specific arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – this vision was so ingrained in Venezuela’s foreign policy that it didn’t separate SSC from other activities, all were part of a greater whole.

PetroCaribe and ALBA were therefore infused with the same anti-imperial rhetoric and damning portrayal of Northern aid. For example, PetroCaribe documents included the following preamble to the terms of the arrangement:

“The member states of PetroCaribe... [h]ave taken into consideration that in the context of the unfair international economical order, inherited from colonialism and imperialism, and imposed by rich and Developer countries, the present world energy situation, characterized by the unbridled waste of consumerist societies, the decrease of the available capabilities for production and speculation, which translate in an increase of the prices of hydrocarbons, have a growing negative effect on the performance of the economy, as well as on the social situation of the Caribbean countries.” (PDVSA 2011)

This statement uses historical references to pinpoint the origins of injustice and appeal to the reader’s sense of having been wronged and desiring a new way forward – the language is emotive, it ascribes blame. It is the opposite of the DAC’s discourse that appeared cold and technocratic, ignoring past mistakes and omitting discussion of possible causes of inequality. Venezuela’s rhetoric, however, went beyond the rhetoric of SSC – it wasn’t seeking an alternative or a complementary mode of cooperation, but a revolution.

A significant problem with Venezuela’s foreign policy rhetoric was therefore that it reflected the same binary language and divisive image of global affairs as did Northern development discourse. For example:

“While the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) would put the final nail in the shackles of slavery in our America, ALBA would be the great liberating force and energy booster, which alone can lead to development, sovereignty, self-determination and dignity.” (PetroCaribe 2016)

This statement in regards to ALBA presents a dichotomy of the Americas either in chains enslaved by their Northern masters (as under the FTAA), or freed by the great liberator that possesses the *only* way to develop (Venezuela). This type of rhetoric also reinforces global division that is not only based on difference but violent struggle. The outcomes of either the FTAA or ALBA were both unlikely to lead to such extreme results, just as development and international affairs are much more complex ideas than a few paragraphs of carefully chosen words can convey. While

hyperbole can be an effective rhetorical tool, this type of language was designed to be incendiary rather than cooperative, and likely scared away some potential partners.

In regards to the cooperation projects themselves, Venezuela was forthcoming and clear in the principles that should guide its SSC activities and were frequently listed in ALBA and PetroCaribe documents. Hence, while the vision may have been idealistic (and perhaps unrealistic), the policy directing its operations was by no means vague or hidden. The policies reflected official SSC principles – for example, the PetroCaribe guidelines included:

“Venezuela poses a new paradigm that counters the mercantile rules that governed the regional energy market, and promotes on a solidarity and sincerity basis the recovery and strengthening of sovereignty and independence of nations... The Petrocaribe agreement is based on the following political principles: Unity; Solidarity; Cooperation; Complementarity; Energy security; Socio-economic development; Sovereign use of Energy Resources; Environmental awareness; Looking towards the South.” (PetroCaribe 2016)

In contrast to Brazil, Venezuela emphasised the SSC principles of solidarity and sovereignty most strongly in their policies. This harks back to SSC origins and the post-colonial context of the Bandung conference, as well as the examples of Simon Bolivar and other Latin American and Caribbean revolutionaries commonly referred to in Venezuelan foreign policy. In this sense, solidarity was viewed as having a particular meaning for the LAC region and implied the necessity of standing together to gain independence as well as development, as declared in days past. It was also connected to Venezuela’s belief in a social debt owed to poorer nations by those who have fared better due to undeserved resources (as in the case of Venezuela and its oil reserves) (Int.#20.I-Ven). Solidarity was therefore a “permanent” state and defined as a “vow” (ALBA-PTA 2014, 24). Sovereignty was an essential part of this solidarity and was described as not only a principle to guide SSC relations but also that successful SSC would assist in securing sovereignty for all nations:

“ALBA-PTA is a strategic political alliance for the fundamental purpose of binding the capabilities and strengths of Member States, with a view to making structural changes and establishing the necessary relationship so as to attain the overall development necessary to continue existing as sovereign and fair nations.” (ALBA-PTA 2014, 4)

As with Brazil, Venezuela emphasised some SSC principles more than others. Partnership, while present in the language of alliances and both PetroCaribe and

ALBA strongly reinforced equality amongst member states, was promoted noticeably less than solidarity and sovereignty. Mutual benefit, on the other hand, was a more problematic term for Venezuela as it rejected self-interest as a motive for cooperation:

“Trade and investment should not be considered objectives but instruments for achieving sustainable development.” [Int.#20.I-Ven]

“ALBA does not harbor commercial criteria or selfish interests related to business profits or national benefit to the detriment of other peoples.” (ALBA-TCP 2016)

Both of these statements refer to ALBA, which is an important distinction as PetroCaribe had less clear lines in this area due to its operations in oil and loans. Unlike Brazil, Venezuela rarely listed any perceived benefits for itself from SSC and as such didn't emphasise the value that other countries could provide. Mutual benefit was clearly apparent in Venezuelan SSC activities in the form of payments-in-kind and the guaranteed market PetroCaribe provided; however, it was downplayed in the discourse as it didn't fit with the image Venezuela was cultivating. Like Brazil, this image tarnished significantly since it lost its champion in the form of Hugo Chávez and the country fell into economic turmoil. Ironically, while mutual benefit was rejected as a guiding principle, the SSC activity with a clear benefit for Venezuela – PetroCaribe and its guaranteed market – was the most resilient, most likely for that very reason.

Ideas to principles to an established SSC norm regime

Over the course of the last 60 years SSC successfully moved from a series of ideas to a set of coherent principles, and by 2009 it had become an alternative norm regime to Northern-led development cooperation. From its origins at Bandung in 1955 to the *Nairobi Resolution* of 2009, SSC formed and solidified a new means by which countries could cooperate based on the principles of solidarity, partnership, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. It spoke of the South as an active creator and definer of development relations and rejected attempts to bring it in line with those it was attempting to oppose, most notably the DAC.

Dahl stated:

“There are two essential ways of interpreting human co-operation. One is based on reciprocity and exchange between autonomous carriers of agency, be they individuals or societal groups. The other is based on solidarity sharing between

people defined as belonging together on the basis of spiritual or material co-essentiality, or if you wish, identity.” (Dahl 1999, 27)

SSC, in its discourse at least, managed to combine both of these aspects by showing that cooperation could include both noble reasons (“solidarity” and “sharing”) with self-interested exchange (“mutual benefit”). Not only that, it showed how the combination of these could return a sense of agency and value to the South. This was a poignant point of difference to Northern-led development cooperation – the north provided assistance based on a sense of charity (rather than solidarity) without any expectation that exchange could be possible. SSC, on the other hand, was based on a belief that every country had something to give and so mutual benefit was an important and achievable principle.

Due to the fact that SSC was based on broad principles and norms, with no real oversight body (as the DAC acts for Northern aid), it could be interpreted and presented in different ways. Under the direction of President Lula and President Chávez, Brazil and Venezuela both established themselves as SSC norm leaders, aiming to persuade their region and the South to recognise and support the SSC norm regime. They differed somewhat in their message, however. Brazil, on the one hand, emphasised partnership and mutual benefit in its SSC policy, framed in the rhetoric of a more balanced global order; whereas Venezuela emphasised solidarity and respect for sovereignty framed in revolutionary and anti-imperialist rhetoric. Both countries were committed to the central tenets of SSC and wished to see it continue as a separate and independent form of development cooperation; however, the discourse allowed space for variation in how it manifested in foreign policy.

SSC policy, over the course of many decades and reinforced in the last few years of practice, established a clear and coherent norm regime that was both a challenge and alternative to Northern development discourse – and which by 2009 had reached a tipping point with the potential to launch it into a norm cascade. To do this, however, would require the buy in of norm followers in the South – that is, did they find this message persuasive? The following chapters aim to answer that question.

CHAPTER 4

BUYING IN OR BUYING OUT: TESTING THE LIMITS OF SSC RHETORIC

As discussed in the previous chapter, SSC discourse was constructed and evolved over time, moving from a collection of ideas to an established norm regime with core principles designed to hold particular resonance in the Southern imaginary. This chapter examines the response of the international community to the SSC discourse – that is, it attempts to discern the level of success achieved by the SSC discourse over this period in persuading Southern representatives via international documents and policy statements (as examined in Chapter 3) to support and further promote SSC as an alternative norm regime in the field of development cooperation. It focuses on how stakeholders have responded to the mechanism of rhetorical persuasion; the role of demonstration is discussed in later chapters.

In order to answer this question 28 interviews were carried out – 16 with LAC diplomats and 12 with Northern commentators – to discuss their perception of SSC overall, and then particularly in regards to Brazil and Venezuela and their activities in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁵⁵ The interviews were conducted during the latter half of 2015 and discussions were based on SSC activities from the early 2000s to that point. While the focus is on how the South (represented by the LAC diplomats with general but not detailed knowledge of SSC programmes) discuss and perceive SSC, the Northern commentators (made up of academics, experts and journalists with knowledge of SSC) provide a comparison point of how the North perceived SSC over this time. Together these interviewees are referred to as “international observers”, due to their observer rather than stakeholder status. The interviews used open questions with space for diversion and discussion; the goal was to understand what the interviewee knew about SSC and how they perceived it based on what they’d heard (not usually on what they’d seen or partaken in).

This chapter examines the international observer interview data and attempts to draw general conclusions based on this sample. The first section discusses SSC generally and the common themes and issues that emerged in response to being asked to consider SSC as a broad notion. The following sections examine the

⁵⁵ A full explanation of this research is provided in the methodology section in Chapter 1. A full list of interviewees can be found in Appendix 1, Appendix 2A provides a schedule of questions, and Appendix 3A provides a sample interview.

knowledge of and opinions of the interviewees regarding Brazil and Venezuela's specific approaches to SSC. The final section looks at the SSC principles in turn, whether they were raised by the interviewees (they were not asked directly) and how they discussed them, whether they appeared to hold resonance with the interviewees and how they related to SSC overall.

Perceptions of SSC as a broader concept: Filling the assistance gap with experience and empowerment

While specific discussions on Brazil and Venezuela can be found below, this section identifies some general themes regarding SSC that emerged throughout the course of the interviews.

While it was frequently stated by interviewees that SSC had its roots in the NAM and the G77, and as such had a certain Cold War aspect to it, there was also acknowledgement that the modern era of SSC had arisen after the end of the Cold War and especially since the 2000s when the North became more preoccupied with financial and security issues at home and the emerging economies began to have the capacity to look beyond their borders. A common theme in regards to this was that SSC had arrived at the time it was most needed and had stepped in to fill the void the North had left:

“This kind of cooperation responds to a change in the matter of cooperation worldwide because, in the last decade the countries that were usually donors for cooperation have gone through a hard crisis, financial crisis, especially in Europe. And also they have, or maybe because of that, they have raised new reasoning, new reasons for not providing [aid]. They have argued that countries as Costa Rica and many other Latin American countries are middle-income countries. So they don't think that these kinds of countries deserve [aid]. So that has put countries as Costa Rica in a situation where we have to look for other kinds of cooperation and that's where South-South cooperation appears.” [Int.#24.I-Dip]

Hence, it was not only that some Southern countries started looking outward at how they could assist other nations, but that recipient countries were also looking for new sources of assistance. The problem of countries being reclassified as middle-income and therefore “too rich” to receive grant-based ODA was mentioned by many of the LAC diplomats, who stated that this had been done prematurely and at a time when these countries were still in need of assistance. As one diplomat stated:

“Seventy per cent of the poorest people in the world are in middle-income countries. So we may very well have graduated and international donors, bilateral

donors in developed countries in the North may very well consider that we don't deserve their support any more. But if we are going to fight poverty we cannot be left behind. South-South cooperation doesn't care about that. South-South cooperation realises that we deserve to develop and we require funding for this and as a result they are there for us. Unfortunately the availability of funds from certain donors, or lenders if you want, is not as generous, is not sufficient. And that's it. So it's a great help but it's not enough." [Int.#06.I-Dip]

This view that SSC, while being of great benefit, was not sufficient and/or could not replace Northern-led cooperation was a recurring theme amongst most interviewees. As such, SSC tended to be described as an alternative option to Northern-led cooperation that, at this stage at least, was unlikely to eclipse it or make it unnecessary. This reflects the official discourse of SSC that stresses "South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation" (UN General Assembly 2010, para 14). This wasn't seen as a problem, however, as having more options in the development sector was viewed as highly beneficial to recipients – while the North could provide funds, the South could provide real-life experience to solve common problems; and the recipients could pick and choose, and even possibly reject cooperation that came with undesirable terms because there are other options available. The benefits of increased competition in the development marketplace are not overtly provided in SSC discourse; however, they are the logical conclusion of providing a viable alternative to what has been a somewhat monopolistic industry.

Another important and repeated aspect of SSC was that of the South working together and using what it has to improve development, thus creating a sense of empowerment throughout the South. In this way, SSC was viewed as not just about cooperation between Southern countries but about changing how the South sees itself:

"[B]efore that concept started and few countries had started to do that, the bigger ones, it was impossible to think about it. You would always think that you need a donor country to do something, that you need a rich country or a developed country to come and offer you something because they are the one who have the money, they are the ones who have the solutions, they are the ones who have technology. And so that just made all that fall apart and say, wait a minute, everyone has something to give and everyone has something to learn." [Int.#30.I-Ind]

In this way, there is a radical element that runs through SSC concerning the role it can play in international relations and how it can challenge the established global order:

“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. And so we need in the South to become the change that we’re hoping see in the international system because the system has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Why should it change to accommodate newcomers? The newcomers must either come up to what we want or we keep them out. What is there to prevent the newcomers from developing a system that works for them as opposed to thinking this is the only system and so therefore we must add on to it or we’re doomed?” [Int.#26.I-Dip]

This type of rhetoric reflects the underlying sympathy of the idea that a multipolar world would involve a greater role for the South – a point explicitly declared by both Brazil and Venezuela as driving their motives for SSC: Brazil by envisioning a world where “developing countries are no longer passive bystanders” (Amorim 2010, 216), and Venezuela seeking a world “free from hegemonic impositions” (MPPRE 2016). SSC is therefore about more than developmental assistance and a few technical cooperation projects; it is also about the confidence of Southern countries to recognise their strengths and seek global change, perhaps through the reform of global institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, WTO and UN, or by establishing their own institutions that abide by a different set of rules or norms – the SSC norm regime as expressed by norm leaders and framed by organisational platforms could therefore be seen as an integral part of this project.

SSC process and examples – Ad hoc and direct

During the general discussion on SSC, two themes emerged as to the interviewees’ understanding of SSC processes. First, it was often mentioned that SSC projects frequently arose out of meetings within the international organisations, and more commonly in the LAC regional organisations, such as UNASUR and CELAC. As such, SSC was generally described as organic and demand-driven; typically a project occurred due to one nation becoming aware of a programme that another country had successfully implemented and making a request for assistance in that area. Secondly, the cooperation was usually conducted between the appropriate ministries within the countries – hence an education project would usually be carried out by the Ministries of Education of the cooperating countries, and not through a central and dedicated “cooperation” agency of each government. Both of these aspects were portrayed as successful and resulted in relevant and efficient projects; however, it was also described as in the process of changing as specialised cooperation ministries were set up and/or SSC became more institutionalised, as has been the case in Brazil with the ABC. However, where these ministries had become established, they usually performed an administrative role

with the relevant ministry carrying out the project itself and so were still viewed as effective.

During the interviews, a number of examples of SSC projects were provided that the interviewees were aware of, including:

- Bolivia and Brazil cooperating on satellite technology after Bolivia was denied assistance from other sources (Int.#04.I-Dip);
- Guatemala assisting Equatorial Guinea in developing good practices in the sugar industry, which resulted from Guatemala gaining the Presidency of the International Sugar Organization and also holding the World Sugar Summit, as well as a colleague being appointed the Guatemalan Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea and identifying the need (Int.#10.I-Dip);
- Brazil sharing its cancer monitoring programme with Suriname, through a request made at a UNASUR meeting during a coffee break (Int.#30.I-Ind); and
- India assisting Trinidad and Tobago with IT training and technology transfer, a connection made within Commonwealth meetings (Int.#29.I-Dip).

The range of examples given of SSC projects highlights the wide-reaching and broad definition of SSC adopted by Southern stakeholders and hence by this research, as well as the *ad hoc* and seemingly fortuitous nature of the cooperation projects.

Comparisons to Northern-led cooperation: Differences and similarities

A number of differences were identified between SSC and Northern-led cooperation. Oft-repeated was the greater sense of commonality between the countries partaking in SSC and therefore a greater ability to solve common problems. Further, the cooperation was based on programmes that had been implemented elsewhere and found success; they were tried and tested and so had more credibility:

“It’s different because it seeks to replicate successful experiences that developing countries have attained, have achieved. So that’s different, it’s not a recipe coming from top-down for us to adapt, but for us to learn from the experience of neighbors, if you want.” [Int.#06.I-Dip]

As a result, the cooperation was framed as “sharing” knowledge to solve common problems – thus reflecting SSC discourse. It was stated that the starting point for

relations was usually more positive than with Northern-led cooperation due to this sense of commonality:

“There’s a power imbalance still [within SSC] but they’re coming from the same place in some way, at least in theory, like they might share the same history of poverty, of the same types of problems, maybe some of them have overcome those problems more than others, but they don’t have the same colonial or imperial legacy, so there’s less of the potential for being looked at that way, which doesn’t mean to say it doesn’t work in that way.” [Int.#23.I-Com]

Related to the SSC processes discussed above, another significant point of difference was that SSC tended to be viewed as a response to a partner’s needs and wants, not the needs and wants of the donors:

“[The Northern donors] have their own developmental agenda which is not really what you want... South-South Cooperation represents a melting pot of philosophical conceptualisations for modern development where you have the opportunity to discuss and negotiate your actual needs.” [Int.#27.I-Dip]

While this statement may overstate the potential of SSC, it portrays the hangover of colonial-type aid of the 20th century that was perceived as self-serving and universally applied; SSC, on the hand, might encourage dialogue and a new, more “modern”, approach at development tailored to specific conditions. This was connected to the observation that SSC projects were typically implemented at an individual country level rather than lumping a region or group of nations together as if they were homogenous, an aspect of Northern-led cooperation that was viewed as highly negative (Int.#30.I-Ind).

Another difference noted mostly by LAC diplomats was that SSC was more transparent due to how it arises (ie through connections and requests, as discussed above) (Int.#16.I-Dip); however, this was challenged by some Northern commentators who felt that due to the lack of institutions and monitoring SSC was decidedly non-transparent (Int.#22.I-Com). Transparency and accountability are discussed further in later chapters looking at demonstration of SSC in the case studies.

Alongside these differences, a number of similarities between SSC and Northern-led cooperation were also noted during the interviews. The most prominent was the notion that self-interest drives all international relations and so SSC could not be seen as different in this sense:

“I think every cooperation has a meaning... or has a special interest. These interests can be economical, political, cultural, expansion...” [Int.#03.I-Dip]

Similar motivations were also noted between Southern and Northern donors, including the idea that once a country reaches a certain level of development there is the responsibility or expectation that they would look outwards and assist other countries:

“It’s the responsibility of societies to cooperate with others in order to develop. Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, we start doing South-South cooperation because it is an international responsibility. We are part of a community so we have to help others as we have received help from them.” [Int.#07.I-Dip]

However, this also led to the admission that, despite the rhetoric, whether it be SSC or Northern-led cooperation, there was always the necessity for financial resources to accommodate this, even when the cooperation itself wasn’t in monetary form:

“Without money, there is no cooperation. Even universally. No money, no cooperation.” [Int.#03.I-Dip]

As such, it was generally agreed that there must be a certain level of accountability to taxpayers for where this money has gone, and so there is just as strong a responsibility to engage in proper M&E as there is in Northern-led cooperation. The UNOSSC was working on this challenge during the period of study and questioning how to properly monitor SSC without stifling the benefits of a looser process:

“How do we account for South-South cooperation? Do we want to measure impact because people say we have to measure impact and the question can be do we want to do that? Actually I was thinking, ‘we have to measure impact’, and then some people made to me a very strong argument saying ‘wait’ because in some cases in South-South cooperation the process itself is the impact, is the result.” [Int.#05.I-Ind]

This is an interesting point and highlights a significant challenge with SSC – while it is trying to be something different, it is nonetheless very similar to Northern-led cooperation, an “industry” that has a long history and that has developed to be what it is through a process of responding to the same concerns that SSC is now facing. As such, there was much discussion in the interviews of whether the perceived differences between SSC and Northern-led cooperation would narrow over time, if not disappear altogether, or whether SSC could maintain its claim as a genuine alternative that will evolve along its own path rather than merging with the well-trodden road of Northern-led cooperation.

Overall, the international observer interviews displayed a variety of opinions on SSC and how it differed from Northern-led cooperation – some saw few similarities and thereby seemed convinced by the idealistic SSC discourse, while others saw few distinctions between the two and so were skeptical of SSC discourse as either overhyped or as a cover for national ambitions. Most interviewees were somewhere along this spectrum, and noted both the beneficial aspects of SSC and the more problematic areas. Generally, the LAC diplomats were more positive about SSC, although they were not naïve to its potential pitfalls. The Northern commentators, on the other hand, were more likely to be skeptical and tended to highlight its limitations and flaws – as would be expected from this group.

The chapter now turns to the interviewees' perceptions of Brazil and Venezuela as two Latin American Southern donors engaged in SSC activity and promotion.

Perceptions of Brazilian SSC: Diplomatic and ambitious

During the course of discussions on the SSC presented and engaged in by Brazil, a number of general themes and comments emerged. Overall, Brazil was seen as having a strong diplomatic corps and a solid presence in the international sphere, which was something to be respected – and something SSC could be built on. However, the high level of bureaucracy involved in Brazil's SSC activities and the relationship between individual connections and funding for programmes was also noted: "This is about bureaucratic policies. This is about different ministries fighting for prestige and budgets rather than about Brazil's interest in the world" (Int.#17.I-Com). While some viewed this as a cumbersome method that could appear disorganised, it was seen by others as an efficient means by which to conduct SSC. The lack of institutional structures and centralised oversight was said to allow for quick implementation and a wider variety of options – for example, the availability of programmes through State governments rather than only through the national government – an aspect that was seen as unique to Brazil and of tremendous benefit:

"Well the one thing I would say about Brazil that's really special and different is that, not only the federal government engages in South-South cooperation but also the State governments. They have a federal government like the US. So State governments have development banks, so the sources are multiple with Brazil. I think nobody else does this." [Int.#06.I-Dip]

Another oft-mentioned aspect of Brazilian SSC was its connection to the commercial and business interests of the country. That Brazil benefitted from using

Brazilian contractors and companies (eg Vale and Odebrecht) in its SSC projects overseas, as well as expanding its access to foreign markets, was not a debatable point and many interviewees mentioned this whether implicitly or explicitly. For example, one diplomat explained how the Dominican Republic and Brazil had cooperated to build a highway in the Dominican Republic that had resulted in benefits for both countries – Brazil commissioned and funded its own contractors but the Dominican Republic had regulations in place to ensure part of the funding was used for capacity building and paying their own experts – hence it was seen as a win-win (Int.#06.I-Dip). The problem with this commercial aspect was rather that the Brazilians were seen as less willing to discuss this side of their SSC, at least in the past – hence, while the practice was not questioned, their not being upfront about it was:

“Of course, there is a commercial interest, which in Brazil’s case is particularly problematic because the Brazilian South-South cooperation discourse, unlike the Indian or Chinese discourse, systematically denies any link with the commercial.”
[Int.#17.I-Com]

The recent political scandals in Brazil, and particularly the claims against Lula during his time as President, have brought to the forefront issues of corruption and of politicians pushing to get Brazilian companies overseas contracts, and so this was flagged as an ongoing problem (Int.#02.I-Com).

This leads to the next characteristic of Brazilian SSC frequently raised during the interviews – that it was driven strongly by the charismatic President Lula and his vision of a more outward-focused Brazil, which was helped greatly by his equally passionate Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim. While Lula was fortunate to have the economic circumstances to pursue this vision, it seemed clear to the international observers that foreign policy was a top priority and likely would have been regardless of the economics (although to a lesser extent). Hence, Lula’s name was almost always mentioned when discussing Brazilian SSC, as was the decline since his departure in 2011. Dilma Rousseff was seen as having much less enthusiasm for SSC, and as such it had suffered as a result. However, that Dilma Rousseff was focused more on domestic issues rather than foreign policy was viewed as understandable considering the economic and political circumstances up to her impeachment; although it was also seen as a disappointment that Brazil had lost its momentum on not only SSC but also its international standing. This was largely due to the general belief, which largely reflected Brazil’s own stance, that Brazil had

great potential to make a real impact in this area and to be a “voice” for all the South:

“I think what I’ve seen of Brazil is a genuine awareness of the ills within the South and an awareness of what needs to be done to transform the south and how south-south cooperation can become a useful vehicle. Brazil to its credit has a lot of the inbuilt advantages that can make South-South cooperation take off. If you look in terms of energy, if you look in terms of education, if you look in terms of their place in the world, they’re part of BRIC, they’ve been participating in G20 meetings, they have a window in the G7. Brazil is one of the countries that since 1995 or so... have been saying needs to have a seat on the security council, reflective of Brazil’s rise and its place in the world. So they have a lot of would be assets that can help many of the small countries of the south.” [Int.#26.I-Dip]

As the interviews were focused on SSC within the LAC region, there was much discussion on the need for Brazil to maintain good relations with its neighbours as this was seen as both good for Brazil and for the region as a whole. It was stated that Brazil needed the region to give it greater strength in international negotiations and should therefore not neglect its role there; further, it was viewed that Brazil’s success had benefits for Latin America and so other nations were supportive of its rise (Int.#04.I-Dip). SSC was therefore seen as an effective means to forge stronger relations and to cement its role as a regional leader (Int.#24.I-Dip) – a role that should not be taken for granted as there were barriers raised to this, such as differences in language and culture to the rest of the continent (Int.#10.I-Dip).

UNASUR in particular was said to provide an effective forum in which Brazil could partake in cooperation and integration projects and could assist in giving the organisation a stronger voice in the international realm. It was also noted that Brazil had acted in good faith in UNASUR by respecting the equal vote and consensual structure of UNASUR and even going so far as to give their vote last so as not to influence other countries; however, it was acknowledged that, of course, Brazil would not be so magnanimous on issues they felt particularly strongly about (Int.#30.I-Ind). This would suggest that UNASUR might provide some role as an organisational platform for Brazil in promoting SSC, even though this was not its focus. Overall, Brazil’s role within the regional organisations and the LAC region were generally seen as positive.

The danger was stated, however, that Brazil might lose focus on its own region and instead try to forge closer relations with the emerging powers and particularly the BRICS group at the expense of its place in the region. It was acknowledged that the BRICS were likely of more value to Brazil due to the relative size and strength of

those countries, and as such could have a greater impact on the established global order. That said, if Brazil could position itself correctly within both BRICS and the LAC region then it would perhaps have even more strength and the potential to shift the status quo in a direction that would be beneficial for the region and the Global South.⁵⁶

Perceived motivations behind Brazilian SSC – Prestige and commercial gains

There were a number of reasons given for why Brazil began to engage in SSC – some that reflected official SSC rhetoric and others that were inferred. Many interviewees mentioned at least one of the more idealistic reasons given for SSC, including the belief that providing assistance is a responsibility and duty of all advanced nations and Brazil had reached that level and so was fulfilling these obligations (Int.#07.I-Dip);⁵⁷ further, that this was directly associated with the principle of solidarity between Southern countries and a desire to share their knowledge and success (Int.#16.I-Dip). It was rare, however, that these were stated as the only reasons for Brazil's interest in engaging in SSC. It was also suggested that Brazil had used SSC as an effective means to raise the prestige of the country, generating goodwill and gratitude in the region and beyond because “it looks good to help people” (Int.#08.I-Dip), as well as contributing to a sense of national pride at home (Int.#14.I-Dip). SSC was also described as a means to “export” Brazil's own form of development and to establish itself as the experts in certain fields – programmes such as Bolsa Familia and the School Feeding Programme were cited as examples of this (Int.#17.I-Com). Commercial gain and increased market access were also viewed as strong motivating factors:

“It's not altruism, it's business.” [Int.#06.I-Dip]

“If you get your foot in the door in terms of social development, then eventually you get your products in the door also... I think [the Brazilians] have been pretty smart in terms of seizing opportunities... Whether or not you agree with the politics, it's smart economics.” [Int.#08.I-Dip]

⁵⁶ It is of note that IBSA was rarely mentioned in the interviews and most saw BRICS as the forum through which Brazil could assert its greatest power in the international sphere; although it was mentioned that IBSA had potential to be a true example of SSC, especially by bringing the three continents together (Int.#12.I-Com; Int.#17.I-Com).

⁵⁷ While this was a commonly-cited reason for Brazilian SSC, it should be noted that Brazil explained cooperation as a duty of every nation, no matter how small or limited the resources. This was part of promoting Southern value and a reason to encourage mutual benefit between partners. See discussion in Chapter 3.

The most frequently cited motivation for Brazil speaking about and engaging in SSC, however, was to increase its “soft power” and gain influence both within the region and the international sphere – thereby reflecting the academic literature that highlights Brazil’s use of soft power (as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2):

“Brazil has been always a country that has power and not only in the region, but also in the international arena. I think Brazil wants to have this leadership... It could be interesting because Venezuela wants to become a leader in more – in a more confronting perspective – showing it is against, against, against... Brazil, I think, is more in this soft power, ‘I am your friend, I am your friend, I can help you’.” [Int.#25.I-Dip]

That Brazil had long-held global ambitions was not lost on the interviewees. That it was engaging in SSC both on a practical and rhetorical level in order to raise its profile and win friends and allies that could support its bid to have a greater presence in international fora was also not seen as a negative, especially as Brazil tended to be upfront about this – and to link it with a stated intention to do so not just for Brazil but for the region and for all the South. This appeared to be vindicated as it was explained that Brazil having leadership of organisations such as the FAO was beneficial to the region and should it have more power in the UN (as lobbied for) this would likely bring more balance to that institution (Int.#10.I-Dip). Due to Brazil’s size and position this type of behaviour was seen as expected:

“It’s natural that if you have a landmass which is almost a continent in itself, you have all these resources, you have monies coming in, you have opportunities, you’re rising in international stature that you will naturally accept that with this growth, I have certain responsibilities or expectations... A lot of it is being curtailed now because of the economic problems that they’re having in Brazil but I still see that interest in really being an international player and then working to bring a lot of those countries in your zone along with you.” [Int.#26.I-Dip]

The hope that Brazil would use its growing power to challenge the international system and be a voice for the region and the South was a common theme; however, there was also the acknowledgement that ultimately Brazil would seek its own interests above all else, as would most countries (Int.#12.I-Com).

Great potential but limited success

Many interviewees viewed Brazil as having been somewhat successful in their use of SSC as a mode of cooperation and a foreign policy tool, especially in comparison to the pre-Lula era:

“I think that whereas maybe ten years ago, people maybe would have written off Brazil, and saying, ‘Brazil, what do they have?’ Now they are recognised as a country going places... So they are making their mark and they are being recognised for that.” [Int.#08.I-Dip]

However, whilst it appeared that Brazil had gained a “good reputation”, its success was viewed as limited to consolidating its role in the region rather than in establishing its presence in the multilateral fora – Brazil’s failed bid to gain a permanent seat on the UNSC was given as an example of this (Int.#24.I-Dip; Int.#11.I-Com), and its leadership of the WTO was described as “a chip placed in the wrong game” due to the WTO becoming an increasingly irrelevant organisation (Int.#22.I-Com). There were also many comments made that Brazil had overextended itself and – due to an unenthusiastic successor to Lula, economic decline and political turmoil – Brazil was facing the consequences of not being able to deliver what it promised. Under Lula, Brazil raised expectations through strong and visible rhetoric and as a result struggled to meet them going forwards. While there was some understanding, there was also frustration:

“I would say it’s a disastrous failure. And it’s a disastrous failure partly because of the wrong expectations that were raised under the previous government... I think the patience of the International Development Policy Community with Brazil is running out quite fast.” [Int.#17.I-Com]

It was stated that there were now “perceptions that the Brazilians are not serious” and that it “has abandoned the field” at a time when it should be making its mark (Int.#17.I-Com). However, despite these shortfalls, both LAC diplomats and Northern commentators generally perceived Brazil as having established itself as “a force to contend with” (Int.#27.I-Dip) and a significant player in SSC during this period.

Perceptions of Venezuelan SSC: Ideology and oil

The two most prominent and recurring themes in regards to Venezuela and its SSC programmes was its strong association with oil (and oil wealth) and its leftist ideology, much more so than Brazilian SSC⁵⁸ or the other large Southern donors. In

⁵⁸ The Brazilians were also quick to mention this:

“I think it is much more ideologically-oriented than ours... the Brazilian cooperation was much more, I would not label it as ideological in our case but it would be so if you consider for instance the non-alignment movement, maybe ours was something on that trend a little left, more centered and their cooperation was left all the way.” [Int.#28.I-Br]

light of Venezuela's socialist ideology, it was perceived that there was a significant political element to Venezuelan SSC and that it was much less about commercial and economic gain – indeed it was stated that there was little economic justification for the programmes:

“But it is very obvious that Venezuelan Bolivarian Republic has a very clear political agenda in the region, which, yeah, it's in their name, Bolivarian Republic. So they are both very clearly and officially supporting a Bolivarian ideal in Latin America and supporting countries where they have allies and where they also have strategic interests... I don't think there was essentially an economic interest behind [it] because Venezuela does not need that to be able to sell their oil do they?... They have been able to sell it to anyone at all times. So I struggle more to see the economic interest behind it.” [Int.#18.I-Com]

Hence, even where the interviewees disagreed with the politics, there was a general consensus that what Venezuela had attempted to do was unique and game changing in the field of SSC:

“It was an extraordinary, extraordinary investment politically, economically, symbolically in trying to expand this South-South Cooperation and relations at all levels I would say.” [Int.#11.I-Com]

However, there was also wide acknowledgment that Venezuela had struggled “to turn nice ideas into functional initiatives” (Int.#23.I-Com). Further, there were numerous comments concerning a lack of institutional and organisational capacity that led to inefficiency as well as a lack of transparency and oversight. Despite these noted shortcomings, many interviewees referred to the gratitude amongst those countries that had been the recipients of Venezuela's assistance. This was especially the case in regards to PetroCaribe:

“Had it not been for Venezuela, we perhaps would not be able to do many of the things we are doing today... we couldn't exist without them.” [Int.#19.I-Dip]

“They've always given us support and we were dying with the price of oil as what it was, we were dying.” [Int.#27.I-Dip]

“But one cannot deny that the generous terms have been very helpful and I don't see how the Dominican Republic would have coped with the sudden rise in oil prices without PetroCaribe.” [Int.#06.I-Dip]

“What Venezuela has done with PetroCaribe and the other initiatives is remarkable in the sense of providing a significant lifeline, particularly when the price of oil was very high, to the Caribbean and Central American countries.” [Int.#28.I-Br]

“There was a lot of good will. He gave to these little countries, small countries, a voice and a status, and this will never be forgotten there.” [Int.#03.I-Dip]

The role Venezuela played in assisting these nations and in helping to establish regional organisations such as UNASUR and CELAC was generally seen as positive within the region, even if the relationship was a complex one. It was also widely acknowledged that, just as Lula had been the driving force behind Brazilian SSC, Venezuelan SSC was inextricably tied to President Chávez, who was apparently remembered well in the region (even by those who disagreed with his politics): “He was first of all an extraordinary man. He built himself his own revolution” (Int.#03.I-Dip). While it was noted that Venezuela had been active in the region, and especially in assisting the Caribbean for many decades, Chávez brought a new era and impetus to LAC integration and Southern cooperation. Whilst this “cult of personality” around Chávez attracted supporters (Int.#26.I-Dip), his dominance was also seen as problematic when it came to the success or failure of SSC programmes:

“It was also the stroke of a man’s hand away from happening or not happening, it was a very autocratic model I would say. And it was not something that could rely on its own institutions. It depended on the person.” [Int.#10.I-Dip]

Hence, while most interviewees perceived Venezuela’s SSC programmes to be visionary and inspiring, and of great benefit to certain countries, they were also viewed as heavily reliant on the whims of its leader and lacking the institutional capacity to withstand Chávez’s death and the collapse of the oil price. As with Brazil, the economic decline and political turmoil in Venezuela was not unnoticed by interviewees.

Most discussions regarding Venezuelan SSC were usually in relation to ALBA and PetroCaribe (there was little mention of purely bilateral projects that existed outside of these groups⁵⁹) and as such the characteristics given above were applied to these organisations. The projects involving oil financing were frequently discussed and as such PetroCaribe appeared to be the most visible programme, which elicited the most appreciation. PetroCaribe was described first and foremost as a very practical arrangement – the small Caribbean islands needed access to oil and funds and both were made available by Venezuela through a contractual and defined

⁵⁹ That is not to say that there were no examples of bilateral projects (as shown in the case studies discussed in the following chapters) but that the interviewees were most aware of ALBA and PetroCaribe as the most prominent examples of Venezuelan SSC.

system of loans.⁶⁰ It was explained that while the funds were meant to be used on social projects there was little oversight as well as wide interpretation of what could be included under this definition. For example, it was stated that Belize devoted these funds to infrastructure (Int.#08.I-Dip) and the Dominican Republic used them to assist Haiti (Int.#06.I-Dip). In this way, PetroCaribe appeared to have less of an ideological element than ALBA, although there were countries that had declined to join due to it having too much of a leftist political slant – for example, Guatemala began the membership process in 2008 whilst under a left-wing government but then pulled out when a right-wing government came into power in 2012, it was unclear whether any transactions were made during this time (Int.#10.I-Dip). There was also the concern of building up unmanageable debt and therefore being put in a difficult position vis à vis Venezuela. While this was perceived as something that members should be aware of, it was also expressed to be the responsibility of the recipient to manage the loans correctly: “It’s a policy tool, it depends on us if we use it rightly or not” (Int.#06.I-Dip).

ALBA, on the other hand was perceived to be highly ideological and devoted to the political goal of establishing a more integrated and equal LAC region, as well as challenging US power and influence. However, while some members have been more aligned with this cause (eg Bolivia, Nicaragua), the smaller Caribbean states that make up a large part of the membership have been less ideologically committed and were keen to state this:⁶¹

“ALBA as an organisation versus ALBA as coordinated foreign policy is a whole different story. So there’s no coordination of foreign policy, there is no requisite for philosophical buy in with ALBA. In other words, being a member of ALBA or PetroCaribe does not mean that you agree or you support every aspect of somebody’s foreign policy.” [Int.#27.I-Dip]

That said, there was a stated lack of understanding amongst interviewees from member states as to why their country had decided to join ALBA as the benefits were not as clear as with PetroCaribe (Int.#27.I-Dip). The benefits that were mentioned were usually in relation to the medical assistance that Cuba had provided in the form of eye surgery (Miracle Mission) and scholarships. Further, Cuba was named as the main driver behind ALBA’s ideology: “Cuba is an ALBA member and they are really the ideological leaders of this movement. Venezuela may put the money but the brains are the Cubans” (Int.#06.I-Dip). That Venezuela

⁶⁰ For a full explanation of the workings of PetroCaribe, see Chapter 2.

⁶¹ This is discussed further in Chapter 7.

provided the majority of the financial resources was viewed as a problem that created “links of dependency that affected the sustainability or resilience of ALBA” (Int.#15.I-Com) – an issue that was frequently raised by interviewees considering Venezuela’s position during the time of research (ie late 2015).

Overall, both PetroCaribe and ALBA, and Venezuelan SSC in general, were perceived as positive to the region and had provided benefits to members that could not be ignored. These organisations, as well as initiatives such as attempts to establish a new currency in the form of the “sucre” and the establishment of a new development bank, Banco del Sur, were also viewed as a “new way of thinking” about cooperation in the region and beyond (Int.#25.I-Dip), and as such contributed to the alternative nature of SSC.

Perceived motivations behind Venezuelan SSC – Solidarity and protection

The question as to what Venezuela was hoping to gain from engaging in SSC was perhaps the most polarising, with responses ranging from “I assume altruism is their goal” (Int.#27.I-Dip) to SSC being perceived as a bribery system to buy votes in the OAS and UN (Int.#22.I-Com). However, the most repeated motivation was that Venezuela was seeking allies and support by fostering goodwill. While Brazil was perceived to be seeking allies to gain regional and global power for itself (and perhaps the South), Venezuela was seen as having a grander vision in mind:

“It has very much to do with challenging the power of the United States and creating a kind of alliance of what we can call the third world or south, countries of the south to unsettle the international status quo fundamentally.” [Int.#11.I-Com]

In this way, Venezuela was perceived as attempting to create a multipolar global structure – a goal openly stated as part of their mission statement⁶² (as discussed in Chapter 2) – however, in order to do this it had to gain allies in the region and so was viewed as using SSC as a means to do so:

“I think the main objective is political influence in the region. That’s clearly the main objective, it’s a lever for diplomatic influence and to that extent it has succeeded.” [Int.#06.I-Dip]

⁶² As stated in correspondence with ALBA-TCP: “[The ALBA-TCP] has contributed substantially in the development of a new system of international relations, based on a multi-polar and multi-center geopolitical vision” (Int.#20.I-Ven).

This notion of creating allies was viewed in two ways. The first was that it allowed Venezuela “to safeguard [the] revolution” by creating a protective barrier around itself to prevent Northern interference (Int.#22.I-Com). For example, the following was said in regards to Venezuela’s relations with the Caribbean states:

“I’m not sure how much of it was about genuine South-South Cooperation or how much of it was about building out that diplomatic corridor as a buffer to the imperialists and to those countries who [Chávez] felt in the North had been disrespecting and interfering in the countries in the South.” [Int.#26.I-Dip]

The second was that it was a means to spread Venezuela’s leftist revolution:

“[Venezuela was] exporting an ideology, social, political and that was basically because of Chávez. Chávez’s vision of what Venezuela had to be and how he wanted the neighborhood to look like.” [Int.#10.I-Dip]

Obviously, it is very difficult to uncover the underlying motivations behind any nation’s foreign policy and most include aspects of both realist and ideological assumption; however, Venezuela appeared to be especially puzzling to the interviewees, especially due to the extent of its programs. As such, it was usually conceded that a number of factors were likely at play, including the need for protective foreign relations as well as the socialist principles that Venezuelan SSC rhetoric emphasised so strongly:

“There are ways in which Venezuela doesn’t benefit. I suppose some people say they benefit in a kind of geopolitical sense and I think there is some truth in that, but then I don’t know how you separate out those two things. Like, how much of it is geopolitics, how much of it is this moralist idea of a social debt they talk about?” [Int.#23.I-Com]

Impressive but fading

Whether Venezuela was viewed as having been successful in its use of SSC was a question that received mixed responses. On a project level, it was generally believed that ALBA and PetroCaribe had produced good results (despite acknowledged mismanagement), both in terms of targeting and improving social issues such as education and health, as well as in gaining goodwill from recipient countries and hence securing allies in the region:

“Venezuela has developed a closer circle of partners based on cooperation that is very strong... In [ALBA and PetroCaribe] the relationships of cooperation between Venezuela and the other members are tight, are successful, are acknowledged. And have raised grateful attitudes from the others. And this has enhanced not only the

economic relationship but also the political relationship between Venezuela and those. So it has been successful.” [Int.#24.I-Dip]

These positive attitudes also seemed to have resulted in tangible support within the international sphere:

“They have gained influence in all the fora they participate in; where they need the support of beneficiaries say OAS, CELAC, UNASUR for those members who are in UNASUR. So yeah definitely. In the UN, I mean whenever they present a candidate in the UN they can count on the PetroCaribe members’ support.” [Int.#06.I-Dip]

However, a clear distinction was made between the initial phases of Venezuelan SSC and the more recent period. That is: the period under Chávez when the oil price was high and the vision was clear, which was generally seen as positive and successful (ie 2005–2013); and the period since Chávez’s death when lackluster leadership under President Maduro coincided with the collapse of oil prices, which resulted in significant limitations (ie 2013–2015). While some programmes, PetroCaribe in particular, at the time of research were acknowledged as continuing to an impressive extent considering the circumstances, others seemed to have faded. However, what was perceived to have struggled the most was the “export of the model” and the challenging of the established global order:

“Venezuela under Chavez or when the economic going was good it was most successful. Of course, it never achieved the ultimate goal of Chavez because it was very difficult to achieve, because it was trying to appeal to anti-imperialistic fronts, global anti-imperialist fronts... It really gave Chavez a great international visibility. It really voiced or was able to give voice to a number of political forces and governments that share at least some of his ideas. But I think it was so much dependent first on oil money and second on Chávez’s personal drive and energy and charisma, vision that now, much of that, if not all, has been lost. Yes, for a period of time when the creation of ALBA and all that, it achieved quite a lot considering the limits of Venezuelan power which were always very clear. Now I think it’s almost gone.” [Int.#11.I-Com]

Venezuela’s recent internal struggles were perceived as having somewhat reversed the progress made under Chávez within the region and beyond, and therefore limited its chances as a serious norm leader. If the measure for success was not only to engage in meaningful cooperation but to spread its democratic socialist model to other countries, this was viewed as untenable due to current conditions, as one interviewee stated: “Nobody in Latin America wants to be Venezuela” (Int.#22.I-Com). Despite this, overall Venezuela was viewed as having had a significant impact on both the practice and discussion of SSC.

Perceptions of the SSC principles: Emphasising the practical over the relational

As discussed in previous chapters, the SSC norm regime can be viewed as made up of four fundamental principles – solidarity, partnership, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. This section seeks to determine whether the interviewees raised these principles in regards to SSC and how they were perceived. As explained in Chapter 1, the principles were not explicitly asked about during the interviews; the concern was rather whether the interviewees raised them of their own accord whilst discussing SSC more generally. This was therefore used as a means of determining whether the principles had resonated with this group of international observers – if they were repeated this could be taken as an indicator that the SSC norm regime had spread amongst potential followers (the LAC diplomats) or onlookers (Northern commentators). This section first discusses the rate of mentioning amongst both groups, before examining each principle in turn. Due to the relatively small sample size, this data should be used as suggestive of general trends at that moment in time (ie 2015), not conclusive. As such, for the purposes of this research, the qualitative data in the form of comments are more significant than quantitative breakdowns, although it serves to provide a brief overview of the interview responses.

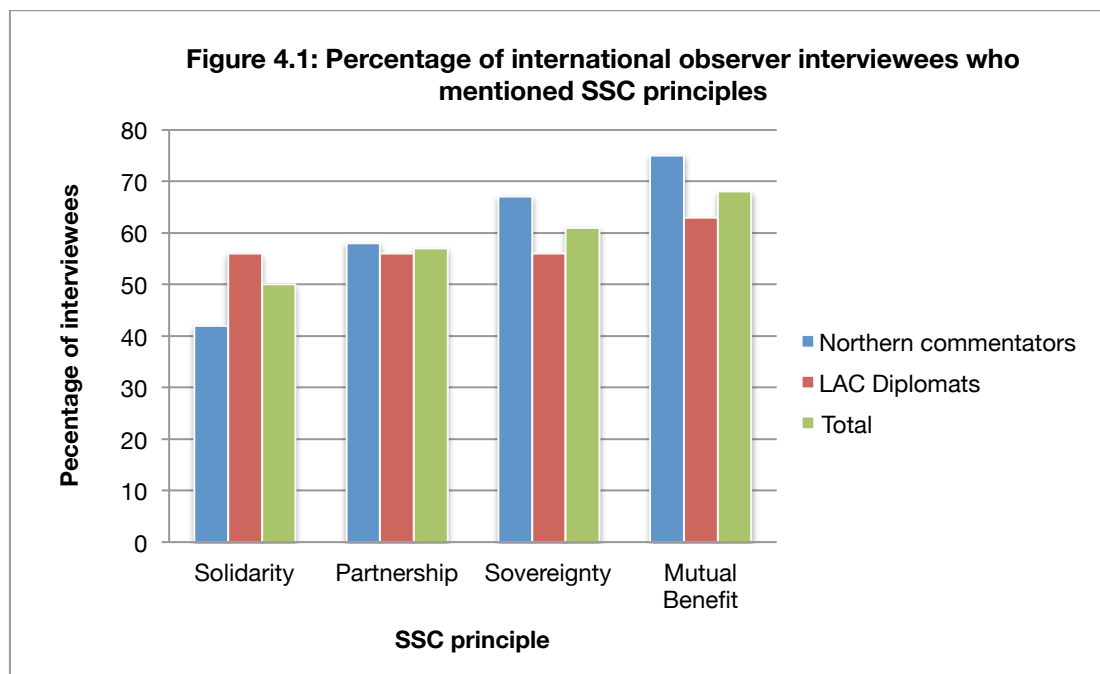
Of the 28 interviewees, only three mentioned none of the principles (11%); however, only five mentioned all four principles (18%). The majority of interviewees mentioned two or more principles (75%).⁶³ The breakdown of instances of the interviewees raising the individual principles is shown in Table 4.1.

⁶³ There didn't appear to be any pattern or correlation as to which principles were mentioned by the interviewees who mentioned more than one principle.

Table 4.1: Number of interviewees who mentioned the SSC principles⁶⁴

	SSC principles			
	Solidarity	Partnership	Sovereignty	Mutual Benefit
LAC diplomats	9/16	9/16	9/16	10/16
Percentage	56%	56%	56%	63%
Northern commentators	5/12	7/12	8/12	9/12
Percentage	42%	58%	67%	75%
All interviewees	14/28	16/28	17/28	19/28
Total percentage	50%	57%	61%	68%

The overall total of interviewees who mentioned each principle ranged from 50% to 68% – hence each principle was mentioned by at least half of all interviewees. Of note is the difference between the “relational” principles of solidarity and partnership, and the “practical” principles of sovereignty and mutual benefit – the relational principles being referred to by slightly less interviewees than the practical principles. There was difference also between the responses of the LAC diplomats and the Northern commentators, as can be seen more clearly in Figure 4.1.



⁶⁴ This table reflects coding of the interview data according to these principles. This was not based on a text search for the exact wording of the principles but based on codes that included instances of these principles being mentioned, whether using that phrase or statements that meant the same thing. That said, the wording was used often, especially for the principles of solidarity and partnership. These numbers do not include interviews with Brazilian and Venezuelan representatives. Percentages have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

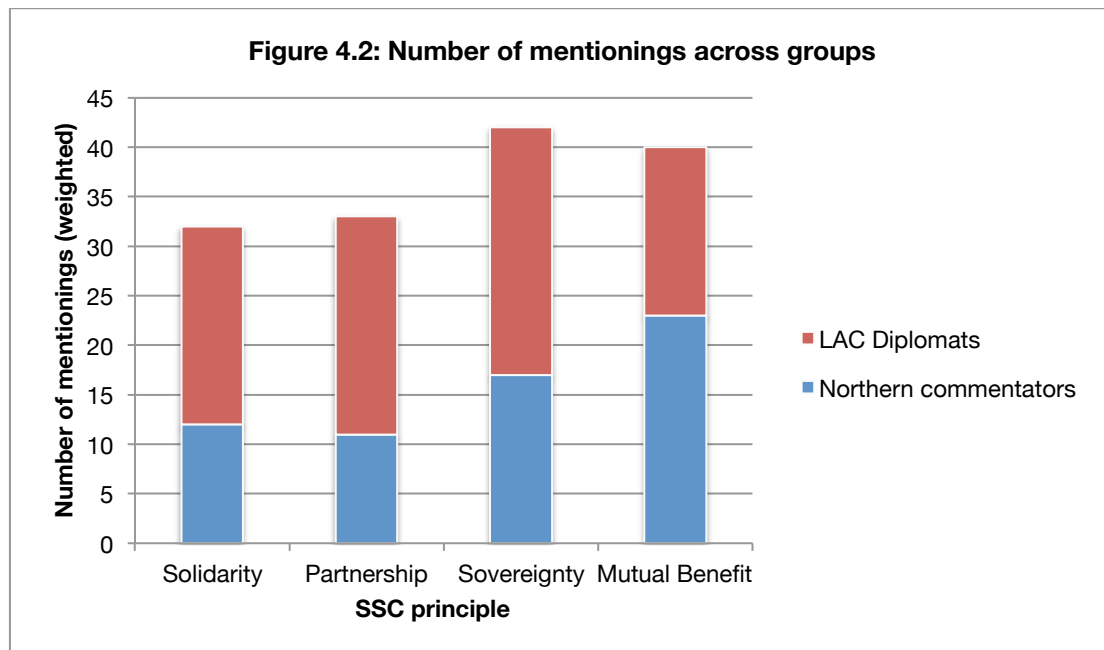
While the LAC diplomat group displayed relatively even results for the principles (each principle was mentioned by just over half of the sample), the Northern commentators showed more preference for certain principles than others. Of particular note is that solidarity was the only principle that was mentioned by more of the LAC diplomats than the Northern commentators. This may be because solidarity in regards to SSC is tied more specifically to the notion of “Southern” solidarity; the LAC diplomats may have identified more strongly with this due to their being from the South. However, it may be that solidarity holds more resonance for those who are from countries that partake in SSC than observers. Mutual benefit, on the other hand, was mentioned by 75% of Northern commentators, and was also the most mentioned principle by the LAC diplomat group. The notion of both countries contributing and benefitting from the cooperation is one of the most practical aspects of SSC and what seems to set it apart from Northern-led cooperation – an aspect noted by many of the interviewees.

The data was also analysed by looking at how many individual instances there were of a principle being mentioned throughout all the interviews. That is, how many times each principle was mentioned, rather than how many interviewees mentioned them. The results of this can be seen in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2.

Table 4.2: Number of times SSC principles were mentioned during the interviews⁶⁵

	SSC principles			
	Solidarity	Partnership	Sovereignty	Mutual Benefit
LAC diplomats	20	22	25	17
Northern commentators	12	11	17	23
Total	32	33	42	40

⁶⁵ This table and graph refer to the number of times each principle was coded as a separate occurrence within each interview, hence the total number of codes attributed to each principle. Due to the difference in sample size between the LAC diplomat and Northern commentator groups, the numbers were weighted to allow for this so they could show a true comparison.



In line with the results above, this measurement also shows that the practical principles were mentioned more times than the relational principles. It also shows, however, that while less LAC diplomats mentioned each principle (as shown in Figure 4.1), those that did mention the principles mentioned them more times than the Northern commentators. This was the case for all the principles except for mutual benefit, where this trend was reversed. The biggest differences between the two groups were in amount of times the relational principles were mentioned, with the LAC diplomats appearing to be more enthusiastic to discuss solidarity and partnership throughout the interviews. However, sovereignty was mentioned the most times by the LAC diplomats and overall. This may be because it includes both practical and relational elements – that is, it relates strongly to issues of conditionality, as well as establishing respect in the relationship – and so can be valued (and discussed) in more than one way.

These numbers are of use to gain an overall picture of the data; however, as stated above, what the interviewees said in regards to these principles is of most value to this research. As such, each principle is now discussed in turn.

Solidarity – Southern and neighbourly

As shown in the tables and figures above, solidarity was the least mentioned principle in regards to both number of interviewees and number of times mentioned, with the Northern commentators less likely to mention solidarity than the LAC diplomats. The criteria to code solidarity included terms such as “brotherhood” and “neighbours” (when used in a relational sense rather than purely geographic), and

as such even despite the more generous definition of this principle it was still less likely to be mentioned and repeated than the other principles. Hence it may be viewed as the principle that has found the least amount of resonance with the international community who are observing SSC from afar rather than participating on the ground. That said, some general conclusions can be drawn as to what it meant to those who did mention solidarity and the role it was seen to play in SSC.

As discussed in earlier chapters, solidarity is presented by Southern donors as foundational to SSC and as a reason countries engage in it. This notion of working together out of solidarity was viewed by interviewees as related to a sense of similarity amongst the countries:

“The likeness of, framed in political terms, not as a cultural-historical likeness, but say political likeness of having suffered from colonialism and imperialism, it was stronger in the origins of South-South cooperation I think.” [Int.#17.I-Com]

This similarity was not linked to a perception of the South as homogenous, but rather that global history and politics had resulted in a power imbalance between the North and South. Hence, the Southern countries were viewed as having a more equal starting point in terms of how they saw each other and SSC was therefore a means to help and assist rather than as a way for one country to dominate the other. This was connected to early SSC rhetoric, as seen in Bandung:

“South-South cooperation has a very strong political origin... it was born in Bandung in 1950s because they decided, again it was an expression of solidarity, we should, the South, the poorest countries and the gap was very wide at the time, work together and help each other. So this modality in addition to all the technical dimensions has a very strong political underpinning and it's still there... which is different from the one of North-South.” [Int.#05.I-Ind]

Solidarity was also said to be based on the belief that all countries “deserve to develop” and SSC was a means to do this, especially as it was built on common challenges that could be tackled together; successes in one country could be replicated in other countries with similar problems (Int.#06.I-Dip). This belief in shared history and commonality therefore led to a type of solidarity that seemed decidedly “Southern”:

“Solidarity... is a sociological category, like you use it just to make it clear that you feel part of a group and not of another one and then you stick to that group instead of trying to pretend to be part of another group or trying to reach another group. Solidarity then for me it's a question about identity and that identity comes from recognising ourselves in our own conditions... That pushes you together and you find yourselves surrounded by people or countries in this case that think alike. You

acknowledge your own conditions and then you want to do something about those conditions without requesting it from the bigger countries.” [Int.#10.I-Dip]

Hence, the solidarity within SSC differs from solidarity that might be achieved between Northern and Southern nations – while there was acknowledgement of genuine friendship and desire to help, a lack of common identity or global political position were barriers difficult to remove. It was also stated that if solidarity were linked to a sense of similarity, this provided a problem for Northern countries that “have shied away” from identifying with countries perceived to be less developed (Int.#17.I-Com) – thereby strengthening barriers that might have been overcome.

In regards to what solidarity within SSC looked like, interviewees discussed a focus on balancing out developmental differences between countries of the South, and working together to find common solutions and give the South a stronger voice. In this way, SSC was viewed as helping to bring countries closer to create stronger ties:

“So it’s a sort of solidarity among equals rather than rich countries providing cooperation to poorest countries. So this is a challenge but it’s... I would say a great challenge because it motivates [us] to try to develop on our own means sharing. Sharing tasks, sharing expenses but sharing also the benefits of the cooperation.” [Int.#24.I-Dip]

It was repeated by many of the LAC diplomats that this solidarity meant helping or forming relations with whatever means available, even if that is only in small ways such as sending diplomatic missions to begin talks. The example was given of Ecuador providing assistance to Haiti after the earthquake; although it may have had less to give than other countries, it was valuable to show their solidarity with that country in whatever way they could (Int.#25.I-Dip).

While Southern solidarity is particularly important to SSC, there was much talk of a more specific type of solidarity within the LAC region that drove the cooperation there. This solidarity was said to arise not only from geographical closeness but also a sense of brotherhood and neighbourly relations that came from similar histories and perhaps a propensity towards leftist politics at the time (Int.#13.I-Com). This solidarity within the region seemed to be more recent, however, than the mid-20th century origins of Southern solidarity generally:

“If you see the region 40 years ago there were still possibilities of war among countries in that region and there were open hostilities among the major countries. And now that’s gone. So particularly in Latin America the real friendship is taking over the suspicions of the past and the idea of working together is very powerful. If

you run polls in the countries you still have issues like between Brazil and Chile and others, Peru and Chile. But in general people see their neighbours as friends and brothers and they don't have resistance to collaborate with their neighbour.” [Int.#05.I-Ind]

The integration projects that have emerged within the last two decades were also seen as expressions of this solidarity:

“It's the vision of the region... in the past we don't have this UNASUR, we don't have Mercosur, we don't have ALBA, we don't have CELAC, now that they are thinking in terms of union, solidarity is becoming more active.” [Int.#25.I-Dip]

Most of the interviewees mentioned solidarity during broader discussions of SSC; however, there were some instances of Brazil and Venezuela being specifically linked with this principle. Neither country was attributed with more solidarity than the other – this was somewhat surprising given Venezuela tended to promote solidarity quite heavily, particularly as it relates to challenging Northern power.⁶⁶ In regards to Venezuela, solidarity was mentioned usually in association with ALBA and how that organisation had demonstrated a desire to develop all members equally (Int.#04.I-Dip). Brazil's solidarity, on the other hand, was viewed as more political and as a way “to capitalise on the political climate of similarity” in order to show their SSC was more “appropriate” than Northern assistance (Int.#17.I-Com). SSC was also viewed as a means by which Brazil could create more solidarity between itself and the region, which may have been lacking in the past (Int.#24.I-Dip). That said, there were also comments that Brazil was acting out of “a genuine solidarity motivation”, at least to some extent (Int.#18.I-Com).

Partnership – Redefining equality

While only around half of the interviewees mentioned partnership, the LAC diplomats that did speak about it raised the subject twice as often as the Northern commentators. As such, it seemed this principle held more resonance with the LAC diplomats (or those that mentioned it at least) than it did with Northern commentators. This may be because partnership was related to how the parties felt about the relations within SSC rather than what it looked like – hence it seemed to evoke more personal and emotive responses than the other principles. The emotive responses were most present in describing how partnership was especially important in SSC due to the fact that North-South relations were commonly seen as

⁶⁶ The interviewees from Bolivia and Ecuador were the most forthcoming in stating that Venezuela especially had acted out of solidarity (Int.#04.I-Dip; Int.#25.I-Dip). This was to be expected from two of Venezuela's closest allies that also follow similar leftist political ideology.

neglecting this principle. Therefore South-South partnership was defined in opposition to North-South domination:

“[SSC] seems more of a partnership – it is definitely more heavy handed with the US and even in terms of, we’ve been, I would say strongholded to change many laws in Belize particularly having to do with the US and their financial rules and having to change our rules in Belize to suit and then still getting blacklisted even when you do what they say.” [Int.#08.I-Dip]

This statement shows the frustration felt within some North-South relations. This appeared to stem from the belief that the North doesn’t feel the South has anything to contribute and hence there can be no partnership when one party feels this way:

“The notion of thinking of poor countries simply as those waiting for a handout as opposed to those who are growing and open and willing to partner with you needs to be adjusted... That divide will continue because the people from the South are often viewed not as contributors of wealth, not as contributors of good but as parasites on the North.” [Int.#26.I-Dip]

In comparison to this treatment by the North, partnership within SSC was seen as valuable and greatly appreciated. The example was given of China becoming more involved in the Caribbean at the same time the UK was pulling back, and how the difference in relations was apparent:

“In the late to mid 2000s... we saw a contraction of those diplomatic presences in the Caribbean region. So you saw the UK relationship just disappear... So when these embassies were just drying up and moving out, China was just moving in and they were not at Acting High Commissioner level or Charge D’affaires or deputy, it was full ambassadorial level. Fully staffed, everybody you could possibly think was there, and you were treated as an equal. And that went a long way because the relationship never evolved past ‘you are a colony’ or ‘you were a former colony’. Countries always felt that they were talked down to, they were dictated to.” [Int.#27.I-Dip]

This idea of being treated as equals in a peer relationship was a common theme and seemed to be the defining characteristic of partnership within SSC. There was recognition that there were significant differences in size and power amongst the countries (especially between nations such as China and the small islands of the Caribbean), however the important point was that it didn’t *feel* like that. Hence, as mentioned above in regards to solidarity, partnership in SSC was about sharing the benefits and responsibility and in this way was linked with the principle of mutual benefit:

“Previously the classic or traditional cooperation usually was around programmes that were in a way imposed by the donors. So the country that would receive the

cooperation didn't have the chance to discuss the contents on an equal-to-equal basis. Now in South-South it is absolutely cooperation between peers so there is known position, there is an open negotiation because they will share expenses and thus they share responsibilities in designing and planning the projects." [Int.#24.I-Dip]

This partnership within SSC appeared to come easier when there was no negative (or sometimes very little) history between the partners that could taint the relations, as well as there being more common challenges to work on together. Hence, while one party may have been stronger in a particular area, the other may have different strengths it could share and so there was "mutual understanding of each other"; therefore, while it may have been "an uneven partnership... it's a partnership that is equally important for both" (Int.#10.I-Dip). This meant that while North-South relations had the potential to become a paternalistic relationship, this was less the case in SSC: "You don't have any paternalism or you try not to have, it's more difficult to have a paternalistic relationship in South-South Cooperation" (Int.#28.I-Br). Partnership within SSC was therefore viewed as not only beneficial for how the countries of the South related to each other but also as a means by which the South could become less dependent on the North:

"South-South cooperation is not about handouts, it's not about looking at a country and seeing what it has and you don't have and how you can get it from them but how you can use your own, let's call them strategic gifts to build the strategic partnership that lifts up both countries or all the countries at the same time... How do we use that to build the kinds of partnership and structured relationships which are going to help the South move themselves up without having to depend on the ODAs from these countries in the North?" [Int.#26.I-Dip]

The notion of partnership within the LAC region was generally seen as positive by the interviewees. There was virtually no mention of Venezuela in regards to partnership; however, the role of Brazil as the largest and most powerful country in the region was raised by some of the interviewees. A Brazilian interviewee recognised this as a potential pitfall and stated that while partnership didn't seem difficult to achieve with cross-continental nations, it was more challenging in its own region because "other countries tend to see Brazil as the big one"; however, it was stated that because "Brazil is not scarred with previous problems" as Northern countries may be, good relations have developed (Int.#28.I-Br). This divide was felt by other countries in the region and so Brazil's concern seemed to be founded, with one interviewee stating, "Brazil is not as equal as Bolivia, for example... Brazil has to be very careful on that", especially as it may be tempting to seek partnership with the "emerging economy" arena at the expense of its own region (Int.#25.I-Dip).

Overall, however, Brazil was viewed as having been successful in fostering partnership within its SSC relations and that it had “learned from the feedback they got” (Int.#05.I-Ind). As one interviewee stated:

“Everybody understands that Brazil is a power house, but they are not flexing their muscles to swamp you, kill you, take over and decimate you. They still speak to you as an equal and they are saying, we know you want stuff we can help you with stuff, here’s something.” [Int.#27.I-Dip]

Respect for sovereignty – Showing respect in relations and practice

The principle of respect for sovereignty was mentioned by over half of both groups of interviewees and was raised the most amount of times of all the principles by the LAC diplomats. As already mentioned, this was likely due to it having both a practical and relational element and so held more scope to be discussed, as will be shown.

Like partnership, sovereignty within SSC was commonly mentioned as being a response to perceived problems in how Northern-led cooperation had been carried out in the past – the North was viewed as having been too willing to intervene in domestic affairs and hence had frequently violated the sovereignty principle via conditional loans and policy demands. In contrast, SSC relations were described as based on mutual respect and because of that Southern donors would not intervene. This difference was identified as originating in the attitude of the donor and whether they were seeking to genuinely help or to promote their own interests. This could therefore result in projects that, while beneficial, were not the top priority of the recipient, as a diplomat from Belize stated:

“The cooperation we tend to get from the North tends to be a little bit more handed down to us, as in ‘we think that this is what you need’. With the North Cooperation we tend to get more stuff having to do with defense, and controlling our borders in terms of drug smuggling mainly because they don’t want it to go further north. The South Cooperation tends to be like I said more with health and infrastructure, social benefits. But the benefits of the cooperation we get from the North tend to be more, ‘We want your countries to do this’. And the other way is more of, ‘Okay, what does your country want to do?’” [Int.#08.I-Dip]

Hence there was a strong perception that the North decided the needs of a country without properly listening to the recipients, therefore showing a lack of respect for sovereignty by not allowing a country to decide for itself what it needed:

“What they do is their technicians or their policymakers will study the countries from outside... they would visit a country or they would just interview someone

from the country and they would say, 'Okay, this is what this country needs'... I think the worst thing they do is, besides developing themselves the policies and not talking about it, is that they take one country and then they say, 'okay, those other six or seven or eight countries are similar'... what happens now is when those agencies or countries they come to the South countries with the same vertical project or proposal, they will not be received as well as they would 20 years ago.” [Int.#30.I-Ind]⁶⁷

The sense that Northern aid projects could be resisted or refused seemed partly due to the availability of alternative assistance such as SSC. The example was given of Bolivia declaring the US Ambassador “persona non grata” in 2008 due to what they felt was an overstepping of their role in opposing the Morales Government; the US then threatened trade sanctions, at which point Venezuela offered to purchase the exports that would have gone unsold otherwise (Int.#23.I-Com). While this was not strictly an example of SSC, it shows how the growing power of Southern countries allows smaller countries to resist pressure that in the past they would have had no choice but to yield.

The most discussed practical element of the principle of sovereignty was that of unconditionality. A lack of conditions was seen as one of the most defining aspects of SSC and also what made it fundamentally different to Northern-led cooperation: “I would say the main difference is conditionality... we have more autonomy deciding what’s priority” (Int.#06.I-Dip). Whilst this is a strongly held principle of SSC discourse and the Southern donors, it was also explained as being due to practical constraints: first, SSC tends to be non-financial and limited in nature, hence there is less room for forcing conditions; and secondly, SSC is usually restricted to state-to-state cooperation and so there is less space to intervene through NGOs and third parties (Int.#05.I-Ind). A third constraint was also raised that Southern donors (at least at the time of study) lacked the capability to enforce conditions should it choose to use them, and as such there was little reason to demand certain conditions when there was no mechanism to monitor them (Int.#10.I-Dip). The lack of conditions was acknowledged as having practical benefits as projects could be done faster and more efficiently due to there being less follow up or lengthy discussion of terms; however, there was also acknowledgement that providing no conditions on assistance could result in waste, corruption and environmental issues (Int.#22.I-Com). Also, as countries become

⁶⁷ It is important to note that, while generalisations were common throughout the interviews, not all countries of the North were perceived in this way and diversity was recognised. In regards to LAC, Canada was singled out as a more helpful donor that was eager to listen to the needs and wants of the recipients (Int.#30.I-Ind).

more powerful and their foreign policy more sophisticated, as well as accountability being demanded by domestic populations, the larger Southern donors may not be able to maintain this approach (Int.#32.I-Dip). In this sense, it was stated that conditionality wasn't always seen as negative, the crux of the issue was what the conditions entailed:

"We don't mind conditionality if it's practical. It's the practicality of the conditionality. So if you say okay, we want to know how the money is spent, that's a practical expectation. We'll definitely and willingly submit ourselves to these... The conditionality that says oh well if we are going to do that, you can't do that and you can't do this but it has no relationship to anything else – what are you talking about?" [Int.#27.I-Dip]

While the practical benefits of unconditional assistance were appreciated, the most important aspect of this principle seemed to be the relational elements, and particularly the notion that respecting a nation's sovereignty was a sign of overall respect and trust. Hence, SSC was described as "cooperation between brothers" and not "between father and son" as it could sometimes be with the North (Int.#04.I-Dip); or, to put it another way, "cooperation without compromise" (Int.#16.I-Dip). This resulted in SSC being perceived as more flexible, "where you have the opportunity to discuss and negotiate your actual needs rather than the imposition of someone's wishes for you on you" (Int.#27.I-Dip).

While this dynamic was seen as effective, there was concern that as countries developed and the power imbalance grew this may shift: "They have to make sure that they still keep their spirit and not go into a paternal North-South relationship" (Int.#05.I-Ind). There was also recognition that stating this ideal didn't necessarily lead to it being the case, especially as there was usually always a stronger party and a weaker party and so the divide between SSC and Northern-led cooperation may not be as wide as it seemed:

"I wouldn't say there is no difference, but I think the idea that it's more of this huge difference – that one is full of conditions, and the other one is absolutely dialogue – I think that's more in the paper than in the reality." [Int.#30.I-Ind]

The concern of power imbalances was mentioned most frequently in regards to China.⁶⁸ However, while Brazil is the largest country in the LAC region and perhaps

⁶⁸ Of all countries discussed, China was raised as having the most potential to be seen to be intervening, as well as its assistance taking no account of environmental issues (Int.#22.I-Com). China's use of tied aid was also mentioned, in that the use of Chinese companies and workers was part of the conditions; however, that they kept out of internal affairs was not disputed (Int.#26.I-Dip).

has the most potential to be a global power, this issue was rarely attached to Brazil and in the few instances it did come up it was regarded as having provided assistance with few conditions and generally being respectful towards other countries.⁶⁹ It was Venezuela, in fact, that raised more questions in regards to respecting the sovereignty of their partners:

“Venezuela came with a political package, like Brazil was basically just trying to get the leadership, a prestige for it to show the world how much they have achieved. Venezuela was more about the export of the model... So with Venezuela the conditions were different in many ways, it was basically to show or to pretend to show the US that it was not the centre of power in the hemisphere... So playing with Venezuela as a counter party always came with that liability as well, not only upsetting the US but also having to deal with the ideological part of it. And especially because it was done in a very paternalistic way...” [Int.#10.I-Dip]

This statement was made in regards to the perceived “grip” that Chávez had over his leftist allies in South America, and that to see this in South-South relationships was “disturbing”. It was also stated that Venezuela, especially through ALBA, had “created links of dependency” (Int.#15.I-Com) – a situation that was viewed as problematic within SSC as it creates more space for intervention and could be perceived as Venezuela establishing its own hegemony in the region (Int.#12.I-Com). While these concerns were justified, other interviewees were eager to praise Venezuela’s lack of conditions and that they had given “as a true friend” (Int.#27.I-Dip). It was stated that within PetroCaribe there was freedom and flexibility to use the funds with virtually no conditions (besides the loosely enforced expectation that they be used on social programmes) and that this was greatly valued (Int.#08.I-Dip).

Overall, the emphasis on the principle of respect for sovereignty by the Southern donors seemed to resonate strongly with the interviewees and was seen as a defining feature of SSC. As shown above, this principle was not viewed as a clear-cut issue, however, as there was always danger of the stronger party overstepping if the power balance became too unequal and/or the ideology was abandoned. Hence as all countries develop, and the weaker nations gain strength, this principle would be more easily followed; and so, as a leading principle and goal of SSC, SSC itself could assist in securing and protecting the sovereignty of the South. It was stated that this was already becoming the case in the LAC region, where due to

Due to these issues, it was questioned whether China’s claims of respecting sovereignty were simply rhetorical and that there may be imperialistic motivations underlying the discourse (Int.#12.I-Com).

⁶⁹ As Brazil was not mentioned explicitly in regards to sovereignty, this seemed to imply it was not an issue in Brazilian SSC. That Brazil was viewed positively in regards to the principle of partnership, as discussed above, reflects this conclusion.

recent developmental gains “the counties are more confident, they have more sovereignty, more autonomy” and as such were more able to resist highly conditioned assistance, especially when alternatives were available (Int.#04.I-Dip).

Mutual benefit – Essential and empowering

Mutual benefit was mentioned by the largest number of interviewees overall. It was also especially noteworthy amongst the Northern commentators, where it was mentioned by 75% of interviewees; it also had the highest number of mentionings amongst those who raised the issue. This may be because it was often linked with other principles, including partnership (as partnership entails both parties contributing and therefore benefitting) and respect for sovereignty (if both parties benefit there is less chance of a dominating relationship). It may also be because the principle of mutual benefit seemed to be described as a more original idea that evolved as part of SSC over time, rather than as a response to Northern “aid”:

“This is a new concept. We are not talking about aid. Cooperation is not aid. That’s very important.” [Int.#03.I-Dip]

As such, it was described as important that each country perceives there to be a benefit rather than one country simply giving and the other taking – or as one interviewee stated, there must be a “coincidence of interests” (Int.#24.I-Dip). As to what this may look like, the concept of mutual learning was offered as a means by which all countries could benefit in SSC – this was seen as especially the case when SSC took the form of technical cooperation where experts were sent to assist and thereby returned to their home country with new knowledge:

“There is a lot of cross-learning and cross-fertilisation that is going on, particularly when it is state-to-state, because you create a bond and a sense of engagement with each other, you literally learn. How do you keep it? Maybe the countries say, ‘I’m going to be the giver’, but because of the way it is implemented there’s a feedback loop there that creates a reciprocity in that relationship.” [Int.#05.I-Ind]

This statement referred specifically to the methods used by Southern donors, with Brazil being noted as particularly successful in this – that is, the cooperation was conducted ministry to ministry and so learning was not lost as it could be when external consultants were used. The concept of “knowing each other better” was also said to lead to more mutually beneficial cooperation as it was easier to identify areas of strength that could be shared and passed on, as well as being more applicable due to them having similar conditions and challenges (Int.#10.I-Dip). In

this way, CELAC was identified as a successful forum for creating relationships and establishing SSC links within the region (Int.#25.I-Dip).

While it was noted by some interviewees that mutual benefit could be achieved by providing support in the region and in international fora, this was not a predominant theme. Where this was the case, it was stated that it was never explicitly said, “but you understand that’s the deal” (Int.#08.I-Dip). This was somewhat surprising considering it was raised by many interviewees that Brazil and Venezuela engaged in SSC at least in part to gain international support and prestige. It seemed then that, while providing this support can be part of the mutual benefit of the arrangement, it was not designed to be *the* benefit but instead more of a byproduct of the good relations formed as a result of the cooperation. In which case, another byproduct was that of the donor country boosting its reputation and achieving a good image (Int.#32.I-Dip) – although, again, this was not usually stated as an explicit benefit or part of the exchange.

Beyond the practical benefits that might be received by both parties, the concept of seeking mutual benefit was also viewed as valuable because it shifted how Southern countries felt about each other and themselves:

“I think [SSC] brought the possibility that South countries can cooperate... maybe it’s not going to be a huge technology cooperation, maybe it’s not going to be with a huge amount of money but still we can cooperate, we can try to. If you have a solution found in your country and it’s working, let’s talk, let’s see how it works for me and maybe even very small countries like, I don’t know, Guyana and Suriname, they can cooperate, they can share experiences and they can share knowledge. I really think that South-South cooperation brought a lot and added a lot of value to the environment of cooperation itself... I truly believe that there is no country that is too big to learn or too small to have something to give.” [Int.#30.I-Ind]

Hence it was repeated that partaking in cooperation that emphasised a reciprocal relationship resulted in a sense of pride, especially for those countries that had been treated in the past as though they had nothing to give:

“There is a lot of good-will involved even if that sounds a little bit naïve... and there is also pride in both of this, you know, like even if I am a small country I can help someone else, someone in my same condition or someone that I think that is little bit worse than I am, something like that.” [Int.#10.I-Dip]

Due to this, it was explained that every country was now attempting to identify areas of strength that it could share: “We have to change our mentality of just showing the hand, we have to be more giving the hand and help each other” (Int.#25.I-Dip). This notion of helping each other was also seen as important in that

it benefitted all for every country to do well, and that there was a responsibility to play your part in assisting the region to develop, regardless of size: “There is an awareness that you are your brother’s keeper and in these issues we have to pull together” (Int.#26.I-Dip).

SSC as positive but unproven

Overall, SSC was identified by most of the interviewees as being a positive force, having notable differences to Northern-led cooperation, providing a necessary alternative to Northern aid and displaying at least some of the principles it claimed to be guided by. It was also viewed as a tool by which the South could reduce its dependency on the North and shift the status quo more in its favour – thereby reflecting the stated motivations of Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC as being part of the means to create a more multipolar world. Further, the belief that this could only be achieved by working together and drawing on the strengths of all, was stated to have an empowering effect on countries of the South, particularly smaller countries with fewer resources. While these ideological elements were seen as significant aspects of SSC, the practical elements appeared to be just as important. For example, SSC was perceived as demand-driven, organic and based on real experience that could be replicated in similar situations. Its focus on technical cooperation was also of benefit, and these projects were seen as effective and relevant. That said, while most interviewees (and especially the LAC diplomats) were enthusiastic about SSC and appreciated its methods, it was raised several times that Northern assistance was still required and SSC at this stage was complementary rather than a replacement – reflecting official SSC rhetoric and policy, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Regarding the SSC principles, it is noteworthy that the practical principles were mentioned more than the relational principles by the interviewees, showing that from afar it was the practical elements of SSC that seemed to matter most to international observers or that had found most resonance. As such, respect for sovereignty was singled out by many interviewees, both LAC diplomats and Northern commentators, as being the defining feature of SSC, in particular its lack of conditionality. Respect for sovereignty was also valued for its relational impact – it showed respect for and trust in the recipients. Venezuela was discussed most in regards to this principle, both in the negative and positive sense, in that while it was praised for its “generosity” it had to be careful not to use it as a way to overstep its bounds. Surprisingly it was mutual benefit that was the most mentioned principle,

frequently raised as the element of SSC that made it seem new rather than simply different to Northern-led cooperation; it created a feeling of worth, of having something to contribute in even the smallest and poorest of nations – and was thus part of SSC’s ability to lead to a sense of Southern empowerment. Partnership was valued in this same regard – it was perceived that the countries were treated as equals and with respect, even where there were considerable power imbalances. Brazil was mentioned frequently as having been successful in promoting and representing this principle, especially considering its relative size and power within the region. The most abstract of the principles – solidarity – seemed to have less resonance with the interviewees overall; although the LAC diplomats raised it notably more than the Northern commentators. This may be because solidarity was used as a more foundational principle and as such had less of a practical meaning, and so there was less space to raise the topic. However, it may be that this principle was viewed as less important to the interviewees or that it was the least resonant part of the SSC norm regime.

Overall, it seemed the SSC discourse had been somewhat successful in finding resonance in the broader international community – all interviewees could discuss SSC in reasonable detail and the majority recognised it as a form of development assistance that existed apart from Northern-led cooperation. Most were aware of the principles and mentioned at least two, and there was generally much enthusiasm about the potential of SSC and its associated norms. The LAC diplomats could be viewed as more positive than the Northern commentators, but by no means blind to potential pitfalls; on the other hand, the Northern commentators, while likely to be more skeptical, were hopeful SSC could develop further or disappointed it had not – indicating its value if it did manage to succeed. Brazil and Venezuela were described somewhat differently in their approach to SSC. Brazil was viewed as globally ambitious but with potential to be a voice for the South – if it could resist adopting a more Northern-outlook as it grew more powerful. It managed to be seen as a partner and a valuable regional contributor, despite barriers, and its technical cooperation was appreciated. Venezuela was viewed as highly ideological and somewhat sacrificial in its SSC; however, concerns regarding mismanagement flagged problems for the sustainability of its programmes and its radical agenda made some uncomfortable. Due to its significant assistance in the form of oil loans and financing, and social programmes, Venezuela elicited especially grateful responses from its recipients and even those who were skeptical tended to acknowledge the impact it had had on SSC and the

region. Due to these differences, Brazil and Venezuela were viewed as offering complementary SSC rather than competitive programmes; in fact, their significant differences – in process, projects and motivations – were therefore perceived as beneficial to recipients as they could draw on each for different purposes.

In light of the interview responses throughout this chapter, it can be concluded that the SSC discourse was somewhat successful in persuading international observers with less detailed knowledge of SSC practice of the value of the SSC norm regime. The principles were known and resonated to a certain extent amongst most interviewees, and Brazil and Venezuela were recognised as two significant players in the field with their own take on the SSC norm regime. At the time of research, SSC appeared to enjoy a fairly good reputation; although it was noted that the scope was still limited and the history relatively short – hence it had not been tested to the full extent that Northern-led cooperation had over many decades and so it could be concluded that this goodwill would not last without action to back it up. In regards to triggering a norm cascade based on persuasive rhetoric alone, these results therefore showed that the discourse could only take the norm regime so far – demonstration is also required, as is discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 5

THE CARIBBEAN, ST LUCIA AND GRENADA AS SITES OF NORM EXPANSION: PRAGMATIC PARTNERSHIPS

For Brazil and Venezuela to become norm leaders in the field of SSC it was necessary to encourage its take up by norm followers.⁷⁰ As discussed in previous chapters, this could be done through persuasion, by presenting the benefits and virtues of SSC in order to convince potential followers to repeat and support this alternative norm regime of international cooperation. However, this appeared to show limited success due to the need for promising rhetoric to be backed up by action. As such, the tool of effective demonstration can be viewed as necessary to attract long-term norm followers. This part of the research (Chapters 5–8) focuses on this process – that is, persuasion *and* demonstration. It does so by examining the two case studies of St Lucia and Grenada and their specific experience with Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC activities during the period 2005–2016. The following chapters therefore draw on the fieldwork data and interview material with Caribbean stakeholders, as well as historical and local commentary.

Before turning to specific programmes, this chapter explores the context within which St Lucia and Grenada were situated at the time of these activities. It explores the history and development of the Caribbean region as a whole, focusing on the specific challenges of the small islands that make up this grouping, before looking more in depth at the states of St Lucia and Grenada. The Caribbean region is shown as displaying some of the characteristics that are relevant to a number of areas within the South that led to the need for and uptake of SSC – including the shift to middle-income status that made them ineligible for grant-based ODA, the withdrawal or loss of interest by traditional Northern powers, and continued high external dependency due to small and under-resourced economies.

⁷⁰ As discussed in previous chapters, Brazil and Venezuela could be viewed as seeking a leadership role within the SSC norm regime, and pursued this goal in a similar manner – that is, through rhetorical persuasion of SSC's virtues and demonstration of those virtues in action – although their visions of SSC included some differences. This research measures the success of their leadership roles by examining how recipients responded and whether they could be considered followers of either vision. For an interesting discussion on the debates surrounding norm evolution and the varied tactics of global norm leaders, see Yan 2011.

Caribbean history and development: Colonial legacies and the long-held quest for independence

While this research focuses specifically on St Lucia and Grenada, it is first useful to situate these two islands within their region. In the broadest sense, the Caribbean includes all those countries that have a coastline that touches the Caribbean Sea, as reflected in the membership of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Within that are the nations that form the CARICOM grouping,⁷¹ and then those that make up the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)⁷² – in which we find the states of St Lucia and Grenada. All of the OECS islands are classified as small island developing states (SIDS), due to their tiny land areas and populations.⁷³ Much of the Caribbean region is therefore made up of islands that suffer from the specific challenges that come with limited size, including a low resource base, skills shortages, reliance on few markets and volatile industries (eg tourism), high levels of debt and aid dependency, as well as environmental concerns such as natural disasters (Sutton 2011). Due to these significant challenges, Sutton (2011, 151) has argued that “vulnerability should be seen as the core characteristic of small states in the contemporary political economy”.

In many ways, the Caribbean region is marked by its colonial history, and the Commonwealth states of the OECS especially so due to their late independence in the 1960s–1980s.⁷⁴ Payne et al (1984, 2) described the Caribbean as “the most colonised of all the colonised regions” due to their peripheral status that resulted in “a powerful sense of inadequacy”. The history of slavery and plantation economics led to societies marked by poverty, social division and weak institutions, that would continue to be dependent on external assistance long after the UK had cut its colonial ties – that most of the islands were reluctant to embrace independence and that it was largely the result of Britain’s loss of interest in the region rather than revolutionary zeal is indicative of the fact that the Caribbean islands were aware that

⁷¹ CARICOM is made up of 15 full member states: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. There are also five non-sovereign Associate Members (Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos).

⁷² The OECS is made up of Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. All of these islands are independent states, except for Montserrat that is a British Overseas Territory.

⁷³ With a total population of just over 1 million people and a land size of around 4,000 km², the OECS in total would be still be classified as a SID in almost any definition used (Sutton 2011).

⁷⁴ Jamaica was the first to gain full independence from the UK in 1962; St Kitts and Nevis was the last in 1983.

it would be difficult to make it on their own (Bishop 2013). Further, the non-sovereign territories tend to enjoy higher development levels than the independent Caribbean states, indicating that this wasn't an unfounded concern.⁷⁵ However, there were some positive aspects of British colonial history, including the use of English as the official language, the successful adoption of the Westminster system that led to solid governance in the region, and the establishment of the University of the West Indies (UWI) that provided, and continues to provide, a strong academic base and arena for development thinking (Sanders 2013a).

The relationship between the Commonwealth Caribbean and the British state shifted significantly throughout the latter half of the 20th century, not only as the result of the move to independence but also due to Britain's evolving relationship with Europe. In 1973, the UK joined the European Common Market, which required it to rethink its colonial relations. The British and French⁷⁶ managed to secure preferential terms for their colonies from the 1970s until these agreements collapsed in 2000 as the result of a challenge brought by the US in the WTO. The withdrawal of these agreements proved devastating for the Caribbean islands that had fostered monopolistic agricultural industries during these years and had little capacity to compete unsupported in the global market (Bishop et al 2013). Girvan described the impact as an "an economic tsunami":

"From 1990 to 2009, banana production in the Windward Islands plummeted from 252,000 tons to 35,000 tons—86 percent; the number of active growers fell from 25,700 in 1990 to 3,000—88 percent; and the number of workers employed in the industry from 77,000 in 1990 to 16,500 in 2002—78 percent." (Girvan 2011a, 18)

The end of these agreements also marked the point when Britain began its political and economic withdrawal from the region. For example, during the 2000s the UK began to consolidate its High Commissions, with a full presence now only in Jamaica and Barbados. The British withdrawal from the region opened up a void that left space (and necessity) for new connections – it was at this time that Southern powers, such as Venezuela, Brazil and China, were showing more interest in the region and it was pragmatic for states such as St Lucia and Grenada to explore new relationships. That Britain was losing its influence in the Commonwealth Caribbean seemed to be of little concern to the UK; however, the unexpected September 2015 announcement of a £300 million Caribbean

⁷⁵ For example, in 2014 the British Virgin Islands had a GDP per capita of US\$30,501.50 compared to St Kitts and Nevis' US\$15,510.40 and Dominica's US\$7,361.20 (UNdata 2016).

⁷⁶ See Pacquement (2010) for a study on Britain and France's differing approaches to their colonies.

infrastructure fund suggested perhaps a renewed interest in the region (Prime Minister's Office 2015).

While it would be easy to dismiss this small group of islands as a colonial backwater with limited economic and political capacity, the Caribbean is placed in a unique geographical and historical space that keeps it connected to the major centres of power:

“[The Caribbean] is unique in the developing world in belonging to two of the great North-South systems of the twentieth century – the American hemispheric system... and the European imperial system.” (Payne and Sutton 2001, 1)

In this way, the Caribbean's past is inextricably link to Northern relations and influence. However, as the global order evolves the Caribbean remains a contested space for competing influences. It is the literal divider between the big players of Brazil and Venezuela in South America and the US to the North, and China has increasingly become a more noticeable presence in these tiny islands as it vies for influence in the western hemisphere. The large number of individual votes the region represents in the multilateral institutions also adds to its relevance, especially as emerging powers seek to challenge the status quo.

While the Caribbean has been impacted heavily by colonial history and external forces, both before and after independence, the region also has a strong intellectual tradition that sought to forge its own development thinking due in large part to the role of the UWI and its quest to see the region overcome vulnerability and dependency.⁷⁷ The 1970s saw the rise of a number of leftist experiments in the region, including Forbes Burnham's cooperative socialism in Guyana, Michael Manley's democratic socialism in Jamaica and then finally Maurice Bishop's revolution in Grenada in 1979 (discussed below). All of these experiments failed and the US invasion of Grenada in 1983 seemed to end once and for all the region's dabbling with socialism (Payne and Sutton 2001).

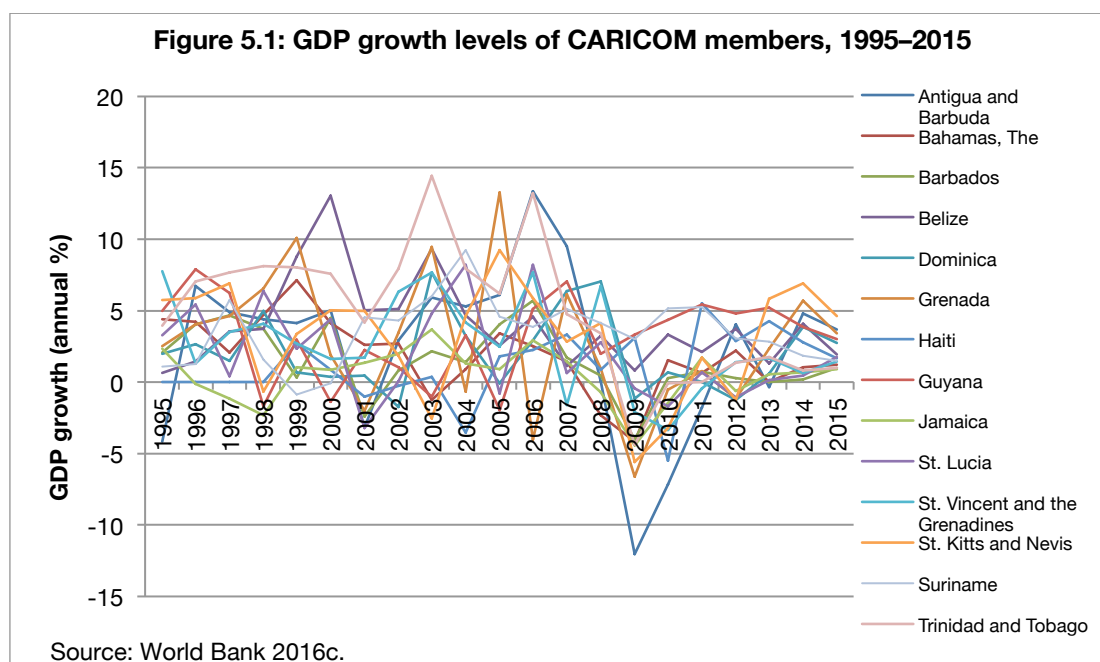
The 1980s saw a focus on neoliberal policies and structural adjustment via the IMF and World Bank. With the end of the Cold War, the US began to lose interest in the region and, with the decline of the banana industry, agriculture was taken over by services and tourism; the “politicos were replaced with tecnicos” who focused on the private sector and developing competitiveness (Sutton 2006, 58). The new

⁷⁷ For example, St Lucia boasts a Nobel prize winning economist, Arthur Lewis. See Payne and Sutton (2001) for a full account of these pursuits.

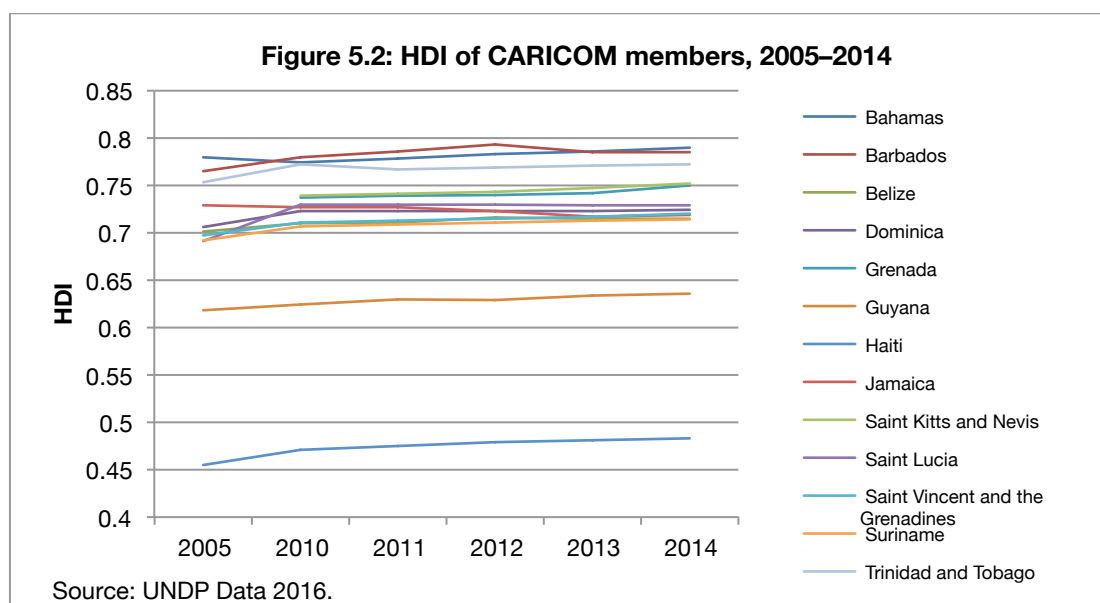
century and the move to a post-Washington Consensus era, while encouraging a renewed attempt at regionalism and focus on human development, resulted primarily in a continuation of neoliberal ideas as reflected in World Bank policies and Caribbean reports of the UNDP (Bishop 2013). The flaws of these policies and the continued dependence on Northern markets through tourism was highlighted by the GFC in 2008, which resulted in the loss of 10% of the region's GDP and drove four countries into IMF loan programmes (Grenada, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Antigua and Barbuda) (Girvan 2011a).

By the mid-2000s, the Eastern Caribbean continued to be marked by physical and economic vulnerability. The region is highly dependent on volatile industries – the Caribbean is the most tourist-dependent area in the world (UNDP 2012) – and as such whole economies are at the whim of global economic conditions and fickle consumer preferences. Natural disasters are also a persistent concern and likely to increase in the future due to climate change and shifts in weather patterns; these fragile economies tend to be one hurricane away from economic collapse.⁷⁸ As a result of this vulnerability, economic growth levels in CARICOM nations are exceptionally volatile, as shown in Figure 5.1. The general downturns due to 9/11 and the GFC can be discerned, as well as how growth was dampened after. Few countries reveal consistent growth and only Belize managed to avoid any years of negative growth over this period.

⁷⁸ The CDB estimated that natural disasters cost the region approximately US\$18 billion between 1988–2012 (UNDP 2016, 7).



Economic vulnerability also impacts on the social indicators of the region and especially education and employment, which are linked to opportunity prospects that are unpredictable and lacking in the Caribbean economy. While primary enrolment rates are close to 100%, secondary school completion rates are more inconsistent (UNDP 2016). Due to a lack of opportunity for highly qualified individuals and double-digit unemployment rates in much of the region (see Table 5.1), “brain drain” is a significant problem, with 65% of tertiary graduates moving overseas (Girvan 2011a). The upside of this, however, is the remittances that flow into the region as a result, with the amount exceeding the combined total of ODA and Foreign Direct Investment in 2002 (Sutton 2006). The HDI of all CARICOM states has been on a general upwards trajectory since 2005 (see Figure 5.2); however, the HDI of some states remained stagnant or saw minor declines over this period, including Guyana, Barbados and St Lucia.



One of the greatest challenges to the region was the shift from low-income status to middle-income and high-income status during the 1990s, which disqualified all the islands (except for Haiti) from being eligible for grant-based ODA. As Table 5.1 shows, poverty is still a significant problem, and middle-income status can mask this reality. The average poverty rate for the region (excluding Haiti) between 2001 and 2015 was 24%, and many more were classified as vulnerable (UNDP 2016). Rates of violent crime and domestic violence were also high, with citizen security levels at less than 50% in 2010 (UNDP 2012).

Table 5.1: A sample of Caribbean indicators

Country	Income status	GNI per capita (US\$) (2014)	Poverty rate (%) (2010)	Unemployment rate (%) (2015)	HDI and global HDI rank (2014)
Antigua and Barbuda	High-income	20,070	18.4	–	0.782 (58 th)
St Kitts and Nevis	High-income	20,400	27	–	0.752 (77 th)
Trinidad and Tobago	High-income	20,070	16.7	3.2	0.772 (64 th)
Grenada	Upper-middle income	11,120	37.7	30.4	0.75 (79 th)
St Lucia	Upper-middle income	10,350	28.8	24.1	0.729 (89 th)
Jamaica	Upper-middle income	8,480	14.5	13.1	0.719 (99 th)

Sources: CARICOM Secretariat 2010a; CDB 2016a; UNDP 2016; UNDP Data 2016.

Many Caribbean islands still receive assistance from DAC members and multilateral organisations; however, these are now in the form of loans rather than grants, which add to the public debt of domestic governments (Lewis 2007). That the region needs to become more self-sufficient in order to reduce its dependency on foreign sources and shelter itself from external events was acknowledged by many interviewees during the course of fieldwork; however, the prohibiting factor appeared to be circumstance, not motivation. The region has been hampered by geography and history: natural disasters are a reality that can be prepared for but not prevented; with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, the islands lack valuable resources to sell or trade; a historical focus on agriculture led to underdeveloped manufacturing or industrial sectors; and tourism and its profits are overwhelmingly in the hands of foreign owners. An oft-raised issue was also the lack of direct transport between the islands, which restricted intra-regional trade (Int.#46.SL; Int.38.Gr; Int.#55.Gr). Concern over exceptionally high food import bills was also a point of frequent discussion (Int.#43.Car; Int.#50.SL). A greater focus on regionalism appears to be a compelling solution to these issues but this has faced significant barriers.

While the West Indies Federation showed early attempts at regionalism, CARICOM, which was formed in 1973, proved the most promising of these pursuits; however, its success has been limited. Despite attempts at a single market, intra-regional

trade remains small, making up only 13% of imports and 16% of exports in 2008 (Warner 2012). While limited product ranges, poor transport links and a lack of Pan-Caribbean companies were cited as reasons for this (Int.38.Gr), it was also suggested that, despite positive regional rhetoric, national priorities tend to trump transnational solutions and hamper any real progress (Girvan 2010). The most successful attempt at regionalism has been the OECS, established in 1981, which boasts a common currency (the Eastern Caribbean Dollar), Central Bank, Supreme Court, Civil Aviation Authority and Telecommunications Authority, as well as relatively free movement of labour and trade. The success of this organisation has been attributed to the cultural, geographic and historical similarity of the member states that have allowed for more common solutions to be proposed and agreed to (Warner 2012). Despite its successes, there has been resistance to relinquishing national sovereignty and forming even closer ties.

This preoccupation with sovereignty has been viewed as a continual problem for establishing effective regional organisations (Girvan 2011a). Lewis (2013a) described this as a “political anxiety” that is the result of size, economic dependency and fear of being over-run by the powerful neighbour to the north. However, whether this sovereignty is a real or attainable goal is a topic for debate, with Lewis (2013b) going on to explain that this claim to sovereignty has always been more of an aspiration than a reality – one that has been used by politicians to maintain their own personal power. As such, this focus on sovereignty can be viewed as largely a rhetorical device:

“Even if sovereignty is a myth, both Caribbean leaders and citizens at large must continue to insist on the principle of sovereignty since failure to do so is to admit a return to de jure colonial rule and to permit others (in the case of the United States) to continue to define and to limit their individual and collective sovereignties.”
(Allahar 2013, 88–89)

Rhetorical or not, sovereignty is a clear concern for the states of the Commonwealth Eastern Caribbean that are eager to maintain it, or at least the appearance of it. For this reason, SSC’s claims of being committed to the principle of sovereignty was a strong incentive for small states of the Caribbean to engage in this type of cooperation.

South-South cooperation within and beyond the region

The persistent problems of economic vulnerability and the need for external assistance (compounded by the loss of grant-based ODA) led the region by the

mid-2000s to “broaden the avenues... and to make up for the shortfall from traditional donors” (Int.#41.SL; Int.#52.Gr). This was done, in part, by looking to the South and embracing SSC. Brazil and Venezuela became two of the major players in this arena, discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. However, there were other examples during the mid-2000s onwards that indicated a shift of the Caribbean’s gaze towards the South.

While Latin American and the Caribbean are frequently viewed as one region, these two areas still have significant divides. Differences in language and culture play a role in this, as well as what has been described as a smugness or superiority on the part of the Caribbean that sees itself as more democratic and less violent than its Latin American neighbours (Allahar 2013; Int.#42.Car). Despite this, in 2005 CARICOM sought to create ties with MERCOSUR in an attempt to “deepen south/south relations”, and pointed to Brazil and Venezuela’s growing interest in the Caribbean as a means by which the region could attain more sustainable development (*Caribbean News Now* 2005).

Historically, the main point of connection between the two regions has been through Guyana and Suriname, which while geographically placed in South America (and therefore part of UNASUR) are also considered Caribbean (and therefore part of CARICOM) (Int.#45.SL). These two nations have also assisted in cementing CELAC relations, which looked to unite all of the LAC nations (van Gerderen-Naar 2011). CELAC seemed to evoke much enthusiasm within the Caribbean, and especially its ability to create a space for genuine discussion that felt balanced due to the absence of the US (Int.#52.Gr). That China engaged in cooperation with CELAC through the China-CELAC Forum, the first meeting of which took place in January 2015 in Barbados, showed its growing credibility (Gill 2015). The Caribbean’s involvement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) also provided a means by which the region engaged in cooperation with other Southern powers, and in 2011 the first ACP-Brazil Summit took place to promote technical cooperation (*Caribbean News Now* 2012a).

There have also been some small and isolated SSC projects, including: technical cooperation and dialogue between Barbados and Chile on tourism, education and healthcare (Ramsay-Moore 2011); a technical cooperation project between Morocco and Dominica on soil mapping and agricultural research (*Caribbean News*

Now 2015b); and a project carried out by Cuba and Barbados aimed at establishing a cassava industry in the region (*Caribbean News Now* 2014a).⁷⁹

Many tangible benefits of embracing Southern relations were noted by Caribbean interviewees, from the practical to the symbolic. On the practical side, it was noted that greater trade and cooperation amongst the South had led to cheaper products due to the ability to buy direct from the producer, which is frequently based in a Southern nation, rather than through the Northern seller (Int.#46.SL). On the symbolic end of the spectrum are the giant infrastructure projects funded and built by the Chinese – for example, the athletic stadium in Grenada – that was said to hold real meaning and importance for the receiving country (Int.#41.SL). SSC was also said to provide space for more dialogue and adaptability, as well as usually being offered on softer terms (Int.#50.SL; Int.#41.SL). Further, it opened up access to new types of knowledge and technical expertise that may be more relevant to Caribbean circumstances (Int.#55.Gr), as well as new markets that previously went untapped (Int.38.Gr). On an international level, SSC was said to be a means by which the Caribbean could “play on a much larger global stage” by forging new connections with emerging powers that could lead to a larger presence in multilateral organisations (Int.#42.Car). As such, SSC was also described as providing a greater voice for the Caribbean and for the South (Int.#33.Gr).

Despite these benefits and the enthusiasm of numerous political players in the Caribbean region, some challenges and concerns were raised in regards to SSC. The first was the lack of reciprocity that is a necessity for the successful functioning of SSC, and yet was not possible in some instances due to the limited capacity of the smaller states (Int.#33.Gr).⁸⁰ Secondly, the lack of institutional organisation within Southern donor governments was noted as a problem that had hindered progress, especially in regards to Brazil (Int.#43.Car). Thirdly, the nature of SSC was described as unpredictable and at the whim of the political parties in power (Int.#55.Gr). Finally, there was a sense of disappointment by those who felt SSC had failed to live up to the “hype” (Int.#43.Car; Int.#45.SL).⁸¹

The Caribbean has been described as pragmatic in its acceptance of assistance, and while states are reluctant to be “bullied” they are also realistic about their needs

⁷⁹ Cuba’s involvement and SSC activities within the Caribbean are long; however, as they pre-date the renewed era of SSC as discussed in this research (ie 2005–2016) they are not examined in detail.

⁸⁰ This is discussed further in Chapter 8, in regards to SSC and mutual benefit.

⁸¹ These benefits and concerns are considered in greater detail in Chapters 6–8.

and are unlikely to refuse what is offered – as one interviewee stated, “we’ll accept anything from everybody” (Int.#27.I-Dip). As such, the growth of SSC during the timeframe explored was largely a response to the void left by the North and continued need for assistance rather than an ideological preference for Southern cooperation: “Some need more, some need less, but basically they all need it” (Int.#35.SL-Br).

This chapter now turns to the specific history and experiences of St Lucia and Grenada that led them to embrace SSC, in light of the discussions above.

Case studies: St Lucia and Grenada

The two island states of St Lucia and Grenada exhibit many of the challenges discussed above in regards to SIDS and Caribbean-specific problems, including middle-income status (and therefore ineligibility for grant-based ODA), economies with high external dependency for survival, indebtedness and vulnerability to natural disasters. They have some of the highest poverty and unemployment levels in the OECS (see Table 5.1) and both states have received large amounts of aid and assistance over the decades, thereby acquiring experience with a variety of bilateral and multilateral donors. Due to the loss of low-income status in the 1990s, however, they have had to look elsewhere for support and have had increased connection with Southern donors since the mid-2000s. Both are members of PetroCaribe and ALBA, and have engaged in cooperation with Venezuela over the past 10 years (see Chapter 7). Further, both began to engage in cooperation with Brazil over this time (see Chapter 6). As such, St Lucia and Grenada together provide a valuable perspective on small Caribbean states that require continual external assistance for economic stability, which have had to look for alternatives due to the reduction of support from traditional partners.

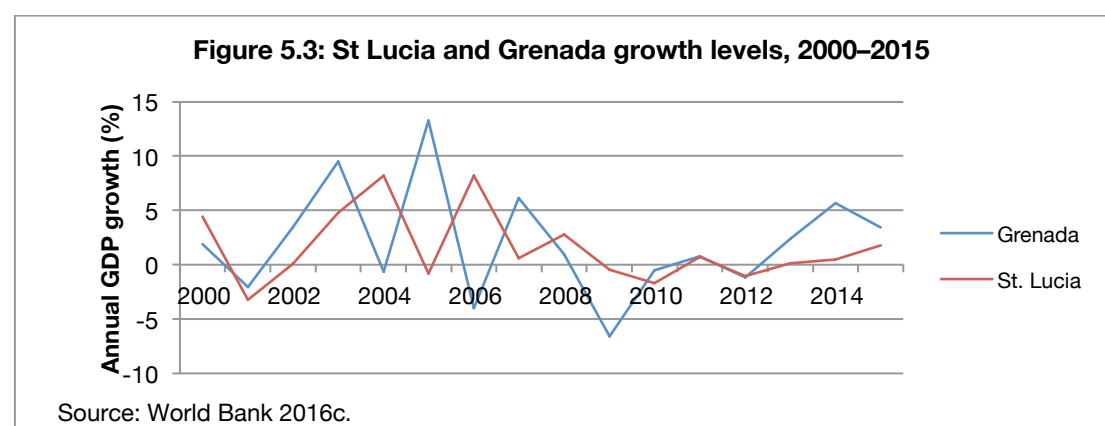
Table 5.2 gives an overview of the economic and social indicators of St Lucia and Grenada, and highlights some of the issues raised above. Figure 5.3 shows the volatile growth levels of each nation that reflect significant global events – dips for each can be seen due to the drop in tourism as a result of 9/11 in 2001 and the GFC in 2008–2009 – as well as national-specific events, discussed below. The small size of the economies and their vulnerability to external shocks and resultant need for aid can be seen in the range of growth levels shown in Table 5.2. For example, Grenada’s average growth of 2.02% over this period masks the wild swings from over 13% to below -6%; that the highest growth was experienced in 2005, a year

after a devastating hurricane that had lasting economic effects, shows the impact of humanitarian aid on such a small economy. Figures 5.4–5.7 show the levels of ODA, both bilateral and multilateral, that St Lucia and Grenada received between 2000–2014 – which, due to their middle-income status, were mostly in the form of loans rather than grants.⁸² These figures highlight the volatility of ODA these countries have received since their shift to middle-income status. Further, the highs and lows are also generally reflective of events that led to assistance, such as the GFC or natural disasters – hence they tended to be one-off bursts followed by a drop to normal levels. In the case of Grenada, IMF assistance packages can also be seen in the figures with the bumps in 2007–2010 and 2014.

Table 5.2: St Lucia and Grenada indicators

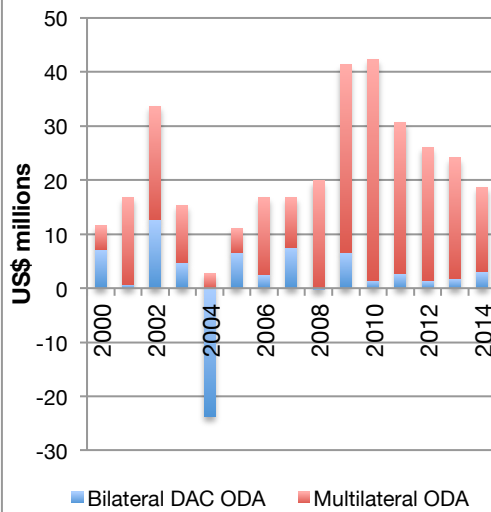
	St Lucia	Grenada
Land area	616 km ²	344 km ²
Population (2016)	164,464	111,219
HDI (2014)	0.729 (89 th)	0.75 (79 th)
Average annual GDP growth 2000–2015	1.55% Lowest: -3.29% (2001) Highest: 8.22% (2006)	2.02% Lowest: -6.61 (2009) Highest: 13.27% (2005)
GNI per capita (2014)	US\$11,120	US\$10,350
Total public debt (2011)	US\$837.6 million	US\$831.4 million
Total debt service as % of revenue (2011)	24.5%	29.4%
Poverty rate (2010)	28.8%	37.7%
Unemployment rate (2015)	24.1%	30.4%

Sources: CARICOM Secretariat 2010a; CIA 2016; CDB 2012, 2013, 2016a; UNDP Data 2016; World Bank 2016c.



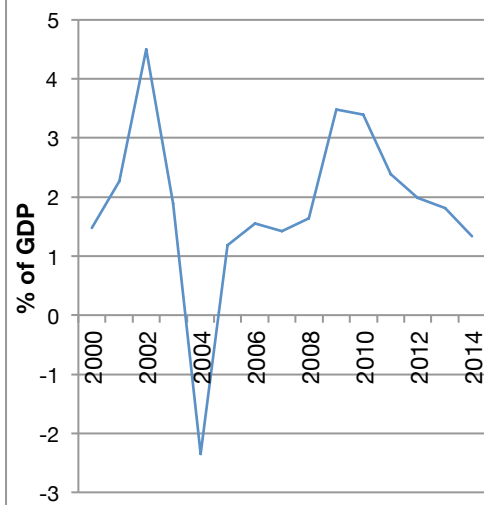
⁸² These numbers do not include assistance from Southern donors.

Figure 5.4: ODA to St Lucia, 2000–2014



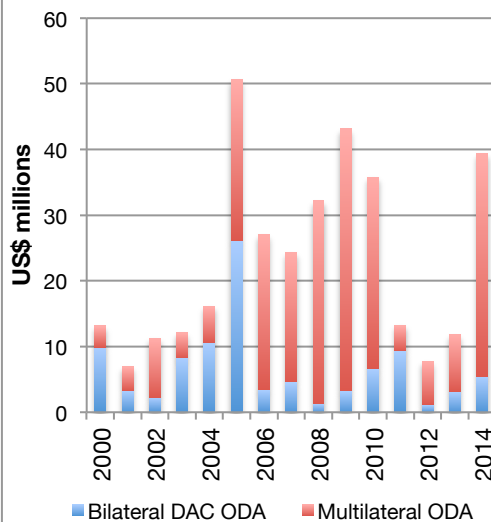
Source: OECD 2016.

Figure 5.5: St Lucia total ODA as % of GDP, 2000–2014



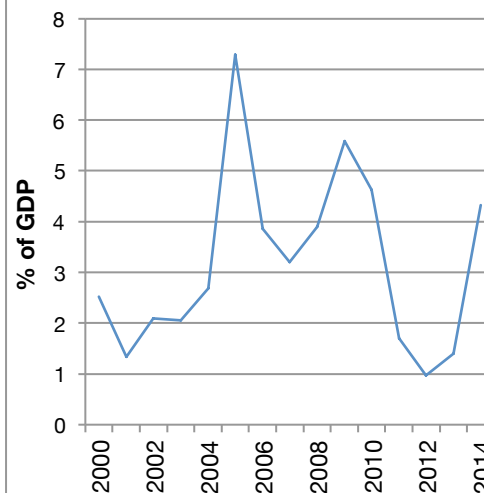
Sources: OECD 2016; World Bank 2016c.

Figure 5.6: ODA to Grenada, 2000–2014



Source: OECD 2016.

Figure 5.7: Grenada total ODA as % of GDP, 2000–2014



Sources: OECD 2016; World Bank 2016c.

St Lucia – Bananas and tourism

St Lucia was first settled by the French in 1660 but became a British colony from 1816 until its independence.⁸³ The history of British St Lucia was indicative of the region's slave history, which, while abolished in 1838, established a legacy of sugar plantations and social division between the ancestral-French plantation owners and

⁸³ The vernacular language of St Lucian Creole French that can be heard all over the island (despite the official language being English) and the many French place names reflect this history.

the impoverished workers who lived in feudal conditions – by the mid-20th century St Lucia was described as a “slum” of the Commonwealth (Joseph 2011, 21).⁸⁴ In the 1960s the dominance of the sugar industry shifted to bananas, which led to the move from large plantations to small farms owned and worked by an emerging rural class. From these population changes came a nationalist movement that was also fueled by universal adult suffrage in 1951 that led to black majorities in local assemblies. The island became an Associated State in 1967 and in 1979 gained full independence; as discussed above, however, this was largely the result of Britain’s eagerness to withdraw its responsibility from the region, and although there were supporters of independence in the country there was also opposition.

Since independence, St Lucia followed the Westminster system of a constitutional monarchy with a Governor-General as head of state and the leader of the majority party as Prime Minister. Power moves back and forth between the more conservative United Workers Party (UWP) and the more liberal St Lucia Labour Party (SLP). The SLP won the first post-independence election and briefly sought alliance with Third-World groups such as the NAM; however, the 1980s were marked by the neoliberal agenda that was adopted across the region and the UWP gained power in 1982. The 1990s saw the privatisation of the banana industry and the eventual collapse of British banana agreements. This had a devastating effect on the St Lucian economy – between 1996 and 1997 banana production dropped from 104,805 tonnes for export (at a value of EC\$128.5 million) to 71,395 tonnes (EC\$74.6 million) (Joseph 2011) – a downward trend that continued after this dramatic drop. As a result, the UWP, which had overseen these changes, lost all but one of the 17 parliamentary seats in the 1997 election and the SLP came into power on the back of disgruntled workers.

Over the next nine years the SLP pursued a fairly mainstream economic path that didn’t vary significantly with previous policies. The greatest changes, however, were made in foreign policy and attempts to look more towards the South for support. Hence, during the early 2000s relations with Cuba were renewed, St Lucia switched its relations with Taiwan to the Republic of China, and in 2005 joined PetroCaribe. However, when power switched back to the UWP in 2006, these changes were reversed – most notably, St Lucia’s membership in PetroCaribe was put on hold

⁸⁴ It was difficult to find detailed sources on St Lucia’s history and current political context. Tennyson Joseph’s book, *Decolonization in St Lucia: Politics and Global Neoliberalism 1945-2010*, proved invaluable in this research and much of the St Lucian history provided here is sourced from this book unless otherwise indicated.

and relations reverted from Beijing to Taipei once again. The next few years saw considerable economic challenges in the form of the GFC in 2008, which impacted heavily on tourism and general economic stability, and Hurricane Tomas in 2010, which caused half a billion dollars worth of damage – both of these events are reflected in the dip in growth levels in Figure 5.3 and the rise in ODA in Figures 5.4 and 5.5. In 2011, the SLP was re-elected once again, which re-engaged the focus on the South by joining ALBA and reactivating membership in PetroCaribe; however, for the sake of stability, relations with Taipei were maintained. In 2016, the UWP regained power once more under the leadership of Allen Chastanet.

In regards to economic development, St Lucia displays many of the problems of the SIDS, and especially those of the small Caribbean states. Its colonial and agricultural history led to the underdevelopment of other industries, and the collapse of the banana agreements was a brutal blow. During the 2000s, however, St Lucia transitioned to a tourism-based economy and attempted to focus on the high-end market, which was relatively successful – however, vulnerability to fickle consumer preferences and global conditions, as well as the persistent problem of watching the profits flow offshore as costs were borne locally made this a problematic means of survival (Bishop 2013). As such, the import bill far outweighs the export bill and, as shown in Table 5.2, public debt over this period was high and required almost a quarter of GDP to service per year. These difficult economic conditions are also reflected in social problems, such as St Lucia's high unemployment rate at just over 24% in 2015, as well as a poverty rate of almost 30% in 2010. While primary school enrolment is almost 100%, as in much of the Commonwealth Caribbean, completion rates are well below this and only 13% went on to tertiary education in 2010 – 36% of this group ended up living abroad (Bishop 2013).

Hence St Lucia displays many of the Caribbean challenges discussed above of being classified as middle-income, and thereby ineligible for grant-based ODA, and yet is far from establishing a self-sustaining economy and has few resources to tackle the social problems of poverty, unemployment and migration. St Lucia attempted to attract foreign investment and on the World Bank's Doing Business Index was listed as the 77th best country in which to start a business in 2016 – the highest in the OECS and well above the LAC average of 109 (World Bank 2016b). However, foreign policy was identified as the area that must be targeted to fuel economic and social development, including through further regional integration in the OECS, seeking out non-traditional partners, and fighting for special and

differential treatment (Harris 2013). St Lucia's increased relations with Venezuela and Brazil between 2005–2016 reflected this goal.

Grenada – Revolution and recovery

Grenada was first settled by the French in 1649, but became a British colony from 1763 until it gained its independence in 1974.⁸⁵ Grenada followed a similar path to St Lucia in this regard – independence was largely the result of British will, having already shifted Grenada's status to Associated Statehood in 1967, and many within Grenada were opposed to independence. The 1970s saw financial crisis and a perception of government as weak and corrupt (Lewis et al 2015). As such only a few years into independence, Grenada embarked on a political experiment that had ripple effects for the region and its future – and put this tiny Caribbean island on the map.

On 13 March 1979, Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement led a revolution that installed the Peoples Revolutionary Government (PRG) as the new state power. The PRG suspended the constitution and elections, and established ties with Cuba that included technical and financial aid, as well as funds to build a new airport in the South (Cotman 2015).⁸⁶ The economic model attempted “non-capitalist” development on the basis that capitalism could be bypassed on the way to socialism – it followed a mixed economy model that attempted to move away from agriculture and towards tourism driven by a strong state sector (Payne and Sutton 2001). While some gains were made in growth and employment levels, ultimately it proved difficult to break from Westminster-style democracy and the party was distracted by leadership disputes that ultimately led to a coup by the Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard in October 1983 and the assassination of Maurice Bishop. On 25 October 1983 the US invaded Grenada – a move that was condemned by the UN General Assembly in a vote of 108 to nine.⁸⁷ This event attracted worldwide attention and also led to difficulties within the region; further, it effectively marked the end of socialist ideas in the region and created lasting trauma and division in Grenadian society (Payne et al 1984; W.C. Grenade 2015).

⁸⁵ Grenada has less of a French influence than St Lucia, and the vernacular language is English Creole.

⁸⁶ The building of this airport with Cuban assistance was viewed as a Cold War threat and so was a factor in the US invasion (Cotman 2015).

⁸⁷ UN Resolution 38/7, 2 Nov 1983. The nine nations that supported the invasion were Dominica, Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, the US, Israel and El Salvador.

After the invasion, the New National Party (NNP) was set up as a coalition of three parties to challenge the PRG and win the 1984 election. Since this time, power has passed back and forth between the two major parties – the National Democratic Congress (NDC) (liberal) and the NNP (conservative). The NNP held power from 1995–2008, at which time the government re-established ties with Cuba (Cotman 2015) and joined PetroCaribe in 2005. The NDC won the 2008 election; however, the NNP came back into power in 2013 with an absolute mandate.

During the 1980s, the economy moved to a neoliberal market-based model and the government agreed to an IMF package that further entrenched these policies. Agriculture began a steady decline: making up 20% of the economy in the 1980s to less than 7% in the 2000s (K.H.I. Grenade 2015). Services and tourism became the main focus and tourism became the island's biggest employer (CBD 2013). As can be seen in Figure 5.3 above, Grenada's economic growth levels over this time were exceptionally volatile and responsive to particular events. The drop in tourism due to 9/11 can be detected, although not as severely as in St Lucia (which had a larger tourism industry). In 2004 Grenada was struck by Hurricane Ivan that devastated the island, causing over US\$1 billion in damage, destroying 30% of houses and affecting 90% of the tourism industry (K.H.I. Grenade 2015). While the country was in the process of rebuilding and recovering, Hurricane Emily struck in 2005 and destroyed any progress made. These two hurricanes also decimated the spices industry – 90% of nutmeg trees were destroyed, with export earnings of EC\$40 million in 2002–2003 falling to an average of EC\$8 million annually since; cocoa production also suffered, moving from an export value of EC\$5.5 million in 2004 to less than EC\$200,000 in 2005 (FAO 2013). As seen in Figures 5.6 and 5.7 above, Grenada received significant bilateral and multilateral support due to these events, and the dire economic circumstances led Grenada to accept an IMF loan package in 2006 to help boost recovery (as can be seen in Figure 5.6). However, with the further challenge of the GFC in 2008 and Grenada's inability to fully recover from these combined events, the package was suspended in 2011 due to Grenada missing all its targets (K.H.I. Grenade 2015).

When the NNP won the 2013 election, they negotiated a new IMF package to restore credibility and confidence in Grenada's economy (*Grenada Informer* 2015b). In July 2014, Prime Minister Mitchell officially wrote to the IMF with Grenada's "home-grown" package and was granted a three-year loan of US\$21.7 million (IMF 2014) – despite this, the policies were reflective of IMF conditions and included structural adjustment designed to encourage business, limit spending and

restructure public debt (CBD 2013). The attempt to encourage business looks somewhat hampered by the World Bank's Doing Business Index of 2016, which ranked Grenada as 135th of 189 countries and thereby the worst in the OECS and well below the LAC average (World Bank 2016a). The considerable difficulties of indebtedness are ongoing due to the fact that 70% of government expenditure goes towards salaries and pensions, leaving only 30% to provide social services and service debt, let alone invest in new programmes. As of March 2016, the IMF stated it was pleased with Grenada's progress (IMF 2016).

Grenada has experienced challenging circumstances over the past 15 years and, as can be seen in Table 5.2, problems of high debt, unemployment and poverty are substantial. As with St Lucia, Grenada has good school enrolment rates but completion is low and there is a lack of opportunity for those with or without tertiary education. The unemployment rate of over 30% in 2015 and poverty rate of 37.7% in 2010 have proven difficult to bring down. Further, over 14% of the population are considered vulnerable, hence over half of Grenada's people are either poor or in a precarious situation (FAO 2013). That said, there have been some improvements: the indigence rate (ie food poor) dropped from 12.9% in 1998 to 2.3% in 2008; and access to flushing toilets moved from 36.1% in 2009 to 61.8% in 2012 (CBD 2013).

As with St Lucia and many of the small Caribbean islands, it is difficult to imagine Grenada becoming fully self-sufficient due to its lack of resources and small population. As such, it attempted to diversify its dependency on Northern assistance by looking towards the South for alternatives, and it was estimated that SSC made up around 25% of Grenada's cooperation programmes by 2016 (Int.#52.Gr). Venezuela and China have been the dominant players: the 2015 budget included grants in the form of the PetroCaribe social funds amounting to EC\$21.7 million (discussed further in Chapter 7), while China provided EC\$15 million in grants – together these made up over half of Grenada's grant revenue (Government of Grenada 2015a). These numbers show how Southern donors have provided assistance that has become increasingly unavailable from the North, and small middle-income countries such as Grenada have welcomed and accepted this offering.

Assistance required

Since the shift from low-income to middle-income status of many small Caribbean states in the 1990s, the region has been forced to look elsewhere for support in

facing significant and persistent economic and social development challenges. The small islands of St Lucia and Grenada, as well as many others, are highly dependent on foreign assistance to fund essential services and invest in capital development, and are also exceptionally vulnerable to natural disasters and external shocks. As such, they face both an ongoing requirement for assistance, as well as intermittent periods of crisis that require immediate bursts of support, and therefore are open to virtually any sources of financial and technical aid to meet these needs. As a response to a decline in Northern interest in the region, the Caribbean has been forced to look to Southern partners for assistance, such as Brazil and Venezuela, which simultaneously expanded their offerings via SSC during this period. The Caribbean is therefore indicative of areas of middle-income countries of the South that require assistance and due to a decline in consistent Northern-led cooperation (especially in the form of grants) are looking for alternative sources. These areas can therefore be viewed as potential followers of the SSC norm regime as promoted by norm leaders such as Brazil and Venezuela. The following chapters examine how Brazil and Venezuela demonstrated the value of SSC and in doing so attempted to convince the small island nations of St Lucia and Grenada to embrace and partake in this alternative norm regime.

CHAPTER 6

BRAZILIAN SSC IN THE CARIBBEAN: PRESENCE AND SUPPORT

As Brazil increased its focus on the Global South and developed its SSC capacity under President Lula, it also turned its gaze towards the Caribbean as part of this strategy. As examined in Chapter 2, Brazil was eager to gain further allies and greater influence within its own region; while South America and its membership in MERCOSUR and UNASUR were high priority, it also looked beyond its immediate neighbours towards the small islands to the North that had the potential to assist in increasing its global power through the Caribbean's many votes in the international fora and develop closer ties that were forming through organisations such as CELAC. As such, SSC provided a valuable tool to develop these relations, and in many ways was indicative of Brazil's activities throughout this period – that is, they largely involved technical cooperation agreements, knowledge sharing, a diplomatic presence and increased dialogue. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Caribbean was eager for assistance at this time and was therefore open to opportunities presented by Brazil.

This chapter traces Brazil's involvement in the Caribbean region during the period from 2005–2016 and highlights the methods and programmes employed in their SSC activities. The first section looks at Brazil's relations with the region and how it increased its engagement with the Caribbean over this period, before looking at its region-wide SSC activities and then specifically at the programmes undertaken with St Lucia and Grenada. Brazil's most significant SSC activity – technical cooperation related to the School Feeding Programme under the auspice of the FAO – is then discussed, both generally and in regards to its functioning in St Lucia and Grenada. Observations are made throughout as to the responses of Caribbean stakeholders to Brazilian SSC activities; however, how Brazil displayed the SSC principles is discussed in Chapter 8.

Brazil in the Caribbean: Building new relationships

Brazil's interest in increasing its presence in the Caribbean from the mid-2000s marked a new pursuit for this South American giant. As such it was perceived at that time as a “newcomer”: “Brazil in its own right is an economic power right next to us and we have not really tapped on to that power” (Int.#44.SL). Lula's expansive

foreign policy, and especially the renewed focus on the LAC region, made the Caribbean an obvious area for Brazil to pursue: “It was a little gap... a natural path” (Int.#51.Gr-Br). As such, very early in Lula’s presidency in 2005, a delegation was sent to various islands, including Grenada, to discern where there may be space for cooperation (Thomas 2005).

As part of Lula’s diplomatic expansion project, Brazil increased its physical presence in the region by opening embassies across the Caribbean in 2008–2009, including in all OECS states and the OECS itself – beginning with an Ambassador to St Lucia in 2008 (who in 2009 also became the Ambassador to the OECS); Grenada’s embassy opened in 2009 (*Caribbean360* 2009; *The Gleaner* 2008). In 2010 Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim (2010, 230) proudly stated that “Brazil now has permanent diplomatic representation in every single Latin American and Caribbean country”. The dramatic increase in Brazil’s diplomatic corps has been questioned as unsustainable by some and this broad presence across the tiny islands of the Caribbean is indicative of such concerns. The Brazilian Ambassador to St Lucia and the OECS expressed the challenges associated with maintaining these embassies, explaining how these small islands were always looking for “donations and grants” but that due to difficulties at home it was a “time of lean, ugly cows” and Brazil simply didn’t have the funds (Int.#35.SL-Br). That said, the Ambassador was enthusiastic about providing assistance through knowledge sharing and technical cooperation, which he believed had been beneficial. Whether Brazil can maintain this physical presence going forward is yet to be seen; however, there was no evidence as at 2016 of embassies being closed or downgraded, although understaffing seemed a potential concern.

Over this time, Brazil also sought greater influence in financial organisations within the region. In 2007, Brazil applied to join the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) as a non-borrowing member, it was accepted in 2008 and officially joined in December 2015 (CDB 2016b).⁸⁸ This move was described as very important to Brazil’s strategy of becoming more involved and to “be known” in the region (Int.#51.Gr-Br). It was also acknowledged as being of strategic importance to the Caribbean: first, by increasing the bank’s capital base; and secondly, as providing a “confidence booster” for the region and the bank by showing it was “worthy of a powerhouse’s

⁸⁸ Other non-borrowing members from the LAC region include Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia; from outside of the region are Canada, China, Germany, Italy and the UK.

membership” (Int.#40.Car). This highlights both the practical and symbolic impact of Brazil’s increased interest in the region over this time.

Brazil’s place within the BRICS and the notion of benefitting from friendship with an emerging global power was viewed as significant for the future of smaller developing countries. As such, Caribbean commentators such as Ronald Sanders encouraged Caribbean leaders to engage with Brazil so they could reap the benefits of its quest for a multipolar world (Sanders 2005). The role of the BRICS in global institutions was also the subject of commentary in local Caribbean media, with Clement Wulf-Soulage (2015) in *The Voice* (St Lucia) stating that the G7 should be scrapped in preference for the BRICS-inclusive G20 “that reflects a more legitimate and realistic consensus of world opinion and circumstances”. Hence, there was a general understanding during this period that if the Caribbean had effective relations with Brazil and Brazil rose (and hopefully made good on its stated goal to rebalance global power in the South’s favour), then the Caribbean would also benefit. It was therefore essential to maintain these relations should that day come. Brazil’s role in the NDB was also viewed as positive for the Caribbean by providing a potential alternative to Northern financing institutions that could help secure their independence (Int.#45.SL). It was also hoped the terms would be “more appropriate and more sympathetic than those now applied by the IMF” (Sanders 2014a).

Besides the geopolitical importance of Brazilian relations, other tangible benefits were also noted, including business and trading opportunities that allowed access to new markets, investment sources and cheaper products (Int.#27.I-Dip; Int.#41.SL; Int.38.Gr) – these mirror Brazil’s commercial interests in conducting SSC and show how partners were happy with a business element entering this field. Further, opportunities for technical cooperation and training programmes were also cited as being much appreciated, especially due to Brazil’s experience and success in a variety of areas and the ongoing benefits of knowledge sharing:

“There is a vast level of experience that they can bring forth. It is not just about spending the money and then walk[ing] out. But there is that level of passing on experience... So when it is time for me to say, ‘I am finished’, there are other individuals who can follow through because they have acquired the experience, the skill to do what needs to be done.” [Int.#50.SL]

Brazil’s financial support was also noted in assisting with the transport and training of citizens that could return with valuable knowledge:

“We don’t have the capacity and we can’t afford in our regular budgets to send technical persons off to train in technical areas that are vital for the development of any sector... so it is of tremendous benefit because they come back [from Brazil] better equipped with better capacity.” [Int.#52.Gr]

Though Brazil’s interest in the Caribbean at that time was received with enthusiasm and the benefits noted and appreciated, concerns were also raised, including the challenge of disappointed hopes – a common refrain heard throughout both the international observer interviews and the Caribbean case studies. Brazil was also aware of these concerns. The Brazilian Ambassador to St Lucia and the OECS recalled how he was informed early in his appointment in 2014 that “Brazil is not offering tangible results ... that they love, they adore Brazil but also that Brazil is considered an elusive country” (Int.#35.SL-Br). These sentiments were referred to by other Caribbean interviewees who stated that Brazil’s performance had been “very disappointing ... lots of promises, very little delivery” and that this may have been due to a lack of institutional capacity within the Brazilian government (Int.#33.Gr) (an issue raised in Chapter 2 regarding the processes behind Brazilian SSC). It was noted, however, that these perceived disappointments could also have been the result of unrealistic expectations:

“Because Brazil is one of the BRICS it may be that we are seeing Brazil, whether consciously or not consciously, very much as we see Canada or US and therefore we expect them to give aid in the same way that these other countries are giving it. And that may not be their intention, their capability, their desire.” [Int.#43.Car]

The problem of Brazil promising more than it could practically deliver was viewed as likely to continue due to political shifts in Brazil and particularly the loss of President Lula, who was well-known as the main driver behind SSC and Brazilian–Caribbean relations (Vieira 2016). As such, there was a wariness of holding too tightly to Brazilian assistance as Lula’s successor Dilma Rousseff, and then President Temer, looked to be more focused on domestic issues. However, the hope was expressed by Brazilian diplomats in St Lucia and Grenada that, while priorities may change and programmes scaled back, Brazilian SSC would not disappear entirely (Int.#35.SL-Br; Int.#51.Gr-Br). The Caribbean response to such concerns was therefore to accept what was available and deal with the future as it came – a pragmatic approach that reflects the Caribbean’s realistic outlook in regards to foreign assistance and cooperation. Hence, while it was frustrating that Brazil may not have delivered everything it promised, there was understanding that tough choices needed to be made:

“I think countries would understand that it’s going through tough economic times, and therefore it cannot be as generous as it was when things were bright and there was milk and honey everywhere... I don’t think they would say Brazil is no longer a friend.” [Int.#41.SL]

As recent events in Brazil have shown, these concerns were not unfounded.

Brazilian SSC projects: Technical cooperation in areas of strength

Brazil engaged in a number of SSC projects during the period from early in Lula’s presidency in 2005 to 2016. This section discusses these activities by first identifying those projects that were focused on cooperation with regional organisations, such as CARICOM and the OECS, before discussing others that were delivered bilaterally, specifically those with St Lucia and Grenada. Brazil’s involvement in the School Feeding Programme is then examined as the most prominent example of Brazilian SSC in St Lucia and Grenada, as well as with other countries in the region.

Regional projects

While Brazil conducted bilateral projects, as discussed below, it also engaged with the Caribbean on a regional basis, both at the CARICOM and OECS level. Many of these related to increasing dialogue with the region as well as providing expert assistance in a wide array of areas, including education, health and the environment.

In 2010, a CARICOM–Brazil Summit was held to discuss new elements of cooperation. Out of that summit an agreement was signed to expand the number of Brazilian lecturers in universities across the region, including UWI. The focus was to be on diplomatic capacity training (as reflects Brazil’s perceived strengths), as well as courses based on the common African and slave heritage of Brazil and the Caribbean – highlighting and building on Brazil’s historical and cultural similarities with the region (CARICOM Secretariat 2010b). Brazil also provided training in water resource and agricultural management during this time. The latest cycle included three training sessions: the first was held in October 2014 at the Brazilian National Water Agency with representatives from Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname; the second

took place in Barbados in October 2015; and a third was planned to take place in Dominica in 2016 (Int.#01.I-Br).⁸⁹

As well as technical training, a number of meetings and conferences occurred during the period that created space for dialogue and opened opportunities for further cooperation. These included: a visit to the region by the ABC Director in 2013, as well as representatives from EMPRABA and the National Water Agency (a visit that was said to have likely laid the groundwork for the water cooperation discussed above) (Int.#01.I-Br); a roundtable on child labour in July 2015 convened by Brazil as part of the Brazil–ILO South-South Cooperation Initiative involving both Caribbean and Latin American representatives, which resulted in expressions of interest in collaborations on this issue (*Caribbean News Now* 2015c); and in October 2015, the CARICOM Secretary-General visited Brazil at the request of the Foreign Minister to strengthen relations and discuss areas of future cooperation (*Caribbean News Now* 2015e).

At the OECS level, during 2006–2013, an ongoing project was carried out between Brazil and the OECS that involved the provision of five shipments of antiretroviral drugs to treat patients with HIV/AIDS – an action that elicited gratitude from recipient states (*Caribbean News Now* 2012c; Lebourne 2012). Brazil delivered the drugs to the OECS in St Lucia and UNICEF in Barbados provided financial assistance so the drugs could be distributed to member states (*Caribbean News Now* 2012c). This programme was therefore an example of Brazil’s use of multilateral support in its SSC programmes as an effective and efficient method of delivery. Extending the diplomatic cooperation that Brazil sought with CARICOM, in 2011 Brazil provided a scholarship worth over US\$50,000 to one OECS candidate to study at the Rio Branco Institute’s diplomatic academy (PANCAP 2012).

The Brazilian Ambassador to the OECS and St Lucia during this time was also proactive in seeking out opportunities for meaningful cooperation that would lead to economic gains for the region by suggesting that Brazil provide training and assistance in the development of cluster models and productive chains that would cut across the OECS. This idea was based on the Eastern Caribbean working together to develop economies of scale in certain industries – something that had proved challenging in the past. While this idea seemed promising and had the

⁸⁹ While the training was provided and funded by Brazil for each of these sessions, travel to the locations seems to have sometimes been funded by Brazil and other times not; how this process was determined was not clear (Int.#35.SL-Br).

support and enthusiasm of the OECS, the project stalled as the Ambassador waited for further response from Brasilia, which stated that he “should not raise expectations” (even though they had already green-lighted for the proposal to be made to the OECS) (Int.#35.SL-Br; Int.#43.Car).⁹⁰ This situation highlighted the administrative problems within Brazilian SSC structures at this time that could prove frustrating for recipients as well as the Brazilian representatives on the ground. As Brazil’s domestic troubles worsened throughout 2016, the prospect of resources being spent on this project did not seem positive. There were also other SSC possibilities being discussed at the time of research (although they also seemed unlikely to progress due to lack of will in the executive branch of the Brazilian government) – including a triangular cooperation programme in agriculture involving Brazilian technical expertise, Mexican funding and Caribbean beneficiaries, which would be one of the first of its kind (Int.#35.SL-Br). While it would seem that this was equally unlikely to progress due to lack of will and funding, this type of South-South triangular cooperation is ideal for Brazil as it includes involvement with little cost. As such, this was a direction that, while there were few examples at the time, may be a potential option for Brazil in the future to continue SSC in a more limited capacity.

Brazil–St Lucia cooperation

The Basic Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the governments of St Lucia and Brazil was signed in April 2010 and over the course of the next six years a number of bilateral projects were undertaken in fields that played to Brazil’s strengths and were requested by St Lucia. For example, in 2010, training took place between the Royal Police Force of St Lucia and the Brazilian Police Academy, first in St Lucia and then in Brazil (ABC 2016). In 2010–2011, Brazil provided training for small farmers and producers to better access the St Lucian domestic market (ABC 2016). Following the “Christmas trough”⁹¹ in 2013 that caused significant damage in St Lucia, Brazil provided US\$15,000 through the FAO to assist in agricultural redevelopment; this assistance was discussed at the official ceremony of the new Ambassador to St Lucia, who spoke of St Lucia’s support for Brazil in multilateral organisations and the hope this would continue – thus publicly drawing the connection between assistance and diplomatic support (Olibert 2014). This aspect is discussed further in Chapter 8 when considering the “mutual benefit” principle.

⁹⁰ At the time of writing, this project appeared not to have progressed.

⁹¹ A meteorological event involving a low pressure system that caused damaging winds, rainfall, flooding and mudslides on Christmas Eve 2013.

As the home of the OECS, St Lucia benefitted from programmes designed for all members states; however, it also received some further benefits as it was frequently the base for pilot projects. For example, in 2015, a programme was proposed for the establishment of a livestock centre of excellence in St Lucia that would encourage further investment in livestock in the region to reduce import bills and encourage growth in the agricultural sector. The project was to be IBSA funded, conducted through the FAO, with EMPRABA involved in training – thus showing again Brazil’s capacity and preference to work through multilateral organisations with which it had close ties (teleSUR 2015b). Further, typical to SSC, the project arose as the result the St Lucian Ambassador to the UN hearing of the programme and requesting for St Lucia to be involved (Int.#36.SL) – it was thus demand-driven and relatively *ad hoc*. As of May 2017, the project was halfway through its course; however, significant delays and political indecision had led to concerns it may not meet the mid-2018 completion date (Joseph 2017).

Another project that highlighted St Lucia’s important role as the home of the OECS, as well as its status as the most business-friendly state in the organisation (as discussed in Chapter 5), was the visit in November 2016 of 20–30 Brazilian business professionals to identify opportunities in the region, using St Lucia as a hub, as well as the possibility of forming a Brazil–OECS Parliamentary Group to involve government in this pursuit (*Caribbean News Now* 2016). Potential business opportunities were discussed and the meeting ended with an invitation for St Lucian and OECS business leaders to visit Brazil to continue the dialogue (*St Lucia News Online* 2017).⁹² Once again, these types of meetings show Brazil’s focus on business and commercial pursuits in their (broadly defined) SSC activities, as well as partner countries’ interest in such conversations.

St Lucia’s relations with Brazil during this period involved opportunities for dialogue and knowledge sharing across diverse areas. Its location as the home of the OECS also allowed St Lucia to form closer ties to Brazil than other member states may have experienced over this time. St Lucia’s experience also highlights the role of proactive diplomats, whether from Brazil or St Lucia, who pursue potential SSC activities and encourage their uptake. The most extensive SSC programme Brazil was involved in during this time, however, was the School Feeding Programme, which is discussed in detail below.

⁹² Whether this visit had occurred at the time of writing was unclear.

Brazil–Grenada cooperation

Grenada and Brazil signed the Basic Agreement on Technical Cooperation, Science and Technology in April 2006; however, it did not come into force until 2010. In comparison to St Lucia, Grenada did not experience a high level of SSC activity with Brazil over this period, although there were a few small technical cooperation projects. As mentioned above, Grenada was one of the nations visited by the Brazilian delegation in 2005 to seek areas of cooperation – from this visit came an invitation for Grenadians to attend a training course in Brazil in 2006 (whether this occurred or what came from this invitation, however, was unclear) (Thomas 2005). The next example found of Brazil–Grenada SSC was in 2010–2011 when, in a similar programme to that conducted with St Lucia, Brazil engaged in cooperation with Grenada that involved training rural workers and assisting producers to access domestic markets, as well as assisting small family-based businesses to achieve best practice in processing agricultural products (ABC 2016). Also in 2011, Brazil and Grenada engaged in an exchange of experiences on health information systems (ABC 2016).

There were few examples that could be found since 2011 of further technical cooperation projects (besides the School Feeding Programme, discussed below). However, there were examples of initiatives conducted by the Brazilian Embassy. These included cultural cooperation in the form of a Brazilian Movie Festival that took place in 2012 and 2013 that was designed to “introduce Grenada to different aspects of Brazilian culture, particularly in light of the South American country’s growing political, economic and social influence in Grenada and the region” (*Grenada Informer* 2013). There was also a training session conducted in 2016 on how to deal with the zika virus (Int.#51.Gr-Br). While on a small scale, these attempts at dialogue and deepening relations between Brazil and Grenada were indicative of Brazil’s presence in these small islands.

While Brazil’s bilateral impact was somewhat limited, the hope was expressed by Grenadian officials that this would grow in the future and expand to areas such as sport, education and diversifying the economy – the rationale being that Grenada would be eager to learn from any successful Brazilian experiences they had to offer (Int.#55.Gr). In that case, the School Feeding Programme was a good example of Brazil sharing expertise in an area in which they were globally recognised – at the time of research Grenada was beginning to benefit from that knowledge.

Brazilian SSC through the School Feeding Programme

One of the most significant and ongoing projects Brazil was engaged in throughout the Caribbean region and particularly in St Lucia and Grenada at this time was the School Feeding Programme. In many ways, this project was indicative of Brazil's particular approach to SSC: it was based on Brazil's successful implementation of the programme in a domestic context, and so played to its strengths; it was managed by the FAO, a multilateral organisation Brazil had strong ties with, led by the Brazilian Director-General, José Graziano da Silva;⁹³ and Brazil participated primarily by providing technical cooperation through training programmes and knowledge sharing. As such, although it fell under a larger FAO initiative, the programme's implementation in the Caribbean region at this moment in time was inextricably linked to Brazil's involvement.

Brazil began its domestic School Feeding Programme in 1954 to target undernourished children and improve education standards, and in 1988 it became a constitutional right that the state should provide every public school primary student with a school meal. In 2009, with the encouragement of the Zero Hunger Initiative of the FAO, Brazil made the programme federal law and expanded it to include all students in public schools from six months to higher education. The programme involves centralised monitoring but day-to-day activities are carried out by the states and individual schools (Pye-Smith 2014). In 2012, the programme reached 14.5 million students across Brazil with an allocated budget of US\$2 billion (Sidaner et al 2012). Ingredients, such as fruit and vegetables, are sourced from local farmers (ideally 30% of the food required) and the menu is carefully designed and controlled to ensure correct calorie intake and nutrition. It is an expansive programme, involving the education of teachers, children and the community on healthy eating and moving to locally available foods, with the hope of not only reducing hunger but also food import bills and the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (such as obesity). Brazil's commitment to the School Feeding Programme is apparent in its place in the constitution and federal law, as well as the substantial funding commitments and its universal nature, and as a result it has become world-renowned and held as an example for other countries to follow (Sidaner et al 2012; Pye-Smith 2014; UNOSSC 2016). Brazil's commitment to this programme has also

⁹³ José Graziano da Silva was elected to the role in 2011 and was re-elected in 2015, hence he will remain Director-General until 2019. He was instrumental in the design and promotion of the Zero Hunger Program in both Brazil and the FAO (FAO 2016c).

extended to beyond its borders, and it has been eager to share (and declare) its success in this field.

Brazil's involvement in the international expansion of the programme was facilitated through a Brazil–FAO initiative under the Zero Hunger Programme as part of the Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean 2025 Initiative established in 2005. The specific project of interest discussed here is the Strengthening of School Feeding Programmes, officially begun in 2009, and the Sustainable Schools Initiative, begun in 2012.⁹⁴ These projects were based on the Brazilian model, described above, and aimed to address economic, health and education issues. The Sustainable Schools Initiative involved the establishment of “pilot schools” in each country that displayed aspects of the ideal set up of the programme that could then be replicated, including: community involvement, education and training on both the program and nutrition; the establishment of a school garden to be used as an educational tool; improvement to infrastructure, including kitchens, dining halls and cooking equipment; the adoption of healthy, local and culturally appropriate meals; and the direct purchasing of ingredients from local family farmers (FAO 2016b).

The nature of the project was therefore trilateral, involving Brazil, the FAO and the participant country. The FAO has been actively involved with SSC since 1996, primarily through the facilitation of knowledge-sharing and partnership promotion, as well as mobilising in-country resources (FAO 2015a). In regards to the School Feeding Programme as implemented in the Caribbean, the FAO was responsible for monitoring and quality assurance, ensuring adherence of participating stakeholders to agreed commitments, and also mediation between parties (ie the programme was designed not to have direct contact between in-country ministries; however, as relationships formed this appeared to become less clear cut); further, the FAO provided funding for necessary school infrastructure in the pilot schools, such as kitchens (Int.#36.SL).

The role of Brazil in this initiative was broad. As mentioned above, the programme was significantly expanded and strengthened under the current Director-General, a Brazilian who was active in school feeding prior to being elected to this role. As

⁹⁴ At 2016, the participating countries included: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines (FAO 2016a). Most were also part of the Sustainable Schools Initiative or in the process of joining (FAO 2016b).

such, it is clear that it was designed with a proactive role for Brazil in mind, as well as a means to promote Brazil's success in this area, and as such can be viewed as compatible with Brazil's motivations to increase its power and influence within the international order and, specifically, multilateral institutions. The administrative division of this programme to a number of government ministries was also indicative of Brazil's less centralised approach to SSC: "In Brazil, the National Fund for Educational Development provides financing while the Ministry of Education, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency [ABC] and the Ministry of External Relations [Itamaraty] set up the policy framework and lead the South-South exchange component" (UNOSSC 2016, 24). While this seems cumbersome, there was little indication from interviewees that it led to confusion or mismanagement.

The most significant role for Brazil was in training and capacity building – from high-level policy assistance to engaging with teachers and farmers. Between 2011 and 2014 it was estimated that approximately 1,500 people had taken part in training through this programme (Pye-Smith 2014). At the time of writing, Brazil and the FAO were working together to build an online course in order to reach more people at lower cost (FAO 2016a). It was the field visits to Brazil, however, that were discussed as having been of most benefit to participants. It was stated these trips were funded by Brazil, including flights and accommodation, and were coordinated through the ABC, although the training was provided through the Ministries of Agriculture and Education (Int.#47.Gr; Int.#36.SL). One of these trips included a four-day technical visit to the state of Santa Catarina in May 2014 with representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, St Lucia and Venezuela in attendance (Pye-Smith 2014). Another visit was also conducted in June 2015, including participants from the above countries as well as Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines. The trips involved visits to schools to witness the programme in action, as well as tours of the family farms that provided food to the local schools. The participants stated they were impressed by what they saw, although they were aware they had been taken to an area where it was particularly successful; nonetheless, the trips were described as "eye-opening":

"We have grappled with that problem of school feeding and we didn't really know how to solve that problem and then when you went into Brazil and you thought 'my goodness', what the children eat and how often they eat and how they did it, it's like a whole new, wow... Brazil is pretty similar to us and so it doesn't make you feel like it's hard or it's unattainable... when you see somewhere, like another grouping that's pretty similar to you who's doing it, it makes it easier to think 'I can do it too'." [Int.#36.SL]

This enthusiasm was also extended to the overall experience of the trip, where participants were given “VIP, red-carpet treatment” and were made to feel very welcome (Int.#47.Gr). The trips were also viewed as opportunities to form closer connections with the Brazilians, as well as other participating countries to hear of their experiences with the programme – for example, a representative from Grenada described how discussions with Belize and Jamaica were of particular interest due to their Caribbean location and larger size (Int.#47.Gr) – highlighting the role of SSC in developing stronger relations within the South and sharing common experiences.

Brazil also funded their own experts to visit participating states to provide in-country training, as was the case of St Lucia that had frequent visits of this kind to train government officials, community leaders, teacher and farmers, as well as to assist in writing manuals for the programme (Int.#36.SL). Both St Lucia and Grenada also described the role of Brazilian experts in carrying out research and making policy recommendations based on local conditions and the benefits of school feeding programmes in each context (Int.#36.SL; Int.#37.Gr). Finally, Brazil provided a nutritionist to draw up a menu best suited to the location and culture, as well as meeting nutrition and calorie standards (Cameron 2015).

The Brazil–FAO School Feeding Programme was highlighted by the UNOSSC as an example of SSC best practice in a 2016 report,⁹⁵ due to its “holistic approach that puts national and local governments in charge of school feeding, focused on improving food access and availability, enhancing farmers’ productivity, providing technical assistance for policy and programming, and supporting the building and sharing of knowledge”; it was also praised for its role in lowering the cost of girls education and hence impacting on gender relations (UNOSSC 2016, 23). A significant benefit of the programme was its adaptability to local conditions, as can be seen in the experiences of St Lucia and Grenada, discussed below.

The St Lucian model

St Lucia has long had a School Feeding Programme; at its origins in the 1970s it included a glass of milk funded by the World Food Programme (Int.#44.SL). In the

⁹⁵ The criteria included:

“[A]ctivities that illustrate the main characteristics of effective South-South and triangular cooperation; initiatives that involve and benefit a great number of people in two or more countries of the South; solutions that have addressed transnational development challenges that would be difficult to tackle singlehandedly; and programmes that have been tested, validated, adapted and/or scaled up in various locations.” (UNOSSC 2016)

1980s, the government took over responsibility for the programme and expanded the offering; due to funding and institutional constraints, however, the programme did not cover all schools and seemed to vary considerably in quality and nutritional value. Nonetheless, the need for the programme and the benefits it could elicit were apparent:

“I taught for 23 years, when I started teaching in 1984 the school I taught, which is my own community school, the school feeding programme was implemented in that very year. And we saw tremendous benefits, more children coming to school. Although at that time it was only EC\$1 for the entire week there still were children who could not make it so the school had to still allow these children.” [Int.#44.SL]

As such, when St Lucia heard about the Brazil-FAO programme through an FAO meeting in 2014, the Minister of Agriculture requested to be a part of it in the hopes of expanding and improving the existing framework (Int.#36.SL). As discussed elsewhere, this is a typical beginning for an SSC project, as stated by one of the St Lucian organisers of the programme:

“We’ve made it our business to know about who is doing what [and] to request and it’s usually forthcoming.” [Int.#36.SL]

The Minister of Agriculture was the main contact point, but a Cabinet Sub-Committee of the Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Health and Social Transformation was set up by the Prime Minister as the group responsible for coordinating with the FAO and Brazil, as well as to monitor the programme over time.⁹⁶ Following the process described above, Brazil assisted first in research and policy that could be taken to Parliament to show the value and cost-effectiveness of using local food and expanding the School Feeding Programme. Between 2014 and 2016, representatives from St Lucia made three visits to Brazil to see the programme at work and participate in training – each visit included more people than the time before as the project gained momentum. Over this time, Brazil also sent a nutritionist to St Lucia to assist with menus and teach the cooks how to prepare the food; other experts also came to train teachers on healthy eating education, and school administrators on how to procure food from local farmers (Int.#36.SL). Brazil’s involvement in this programme, therefore, was largely to encourage participating states to use more local food procured from family farmers, to make the meals healthier and more nutritious, and to educate students and the

⁹⁶ Both the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Education were school teachers and principals prior to joining government; as such, both were particularly passionate about this project and committed to seeing it succeed (Int.#44.SL).

community on healthy eating. Thus the benefits were designed to be long term and result in a healthier population (thereby lowering public health costs) and a lower food import bill – which is of high importance to small Caribbean islands with unsustainable debt.

The programme began official implementation in 2015 and by early 2016 almost all primary schools were covered, some for the first time ever (it was hoped it may be expanded to secondary schools in the future). The cost was subsidised by the government and the meals were available for EC\$1 per child per day; it was free for those who couldn't pay (*St Lucia Times* 2016). The two pilot schools – the urban Marchland Combined School and the rural Bellevue Combined School – as part of the Sustainable Schools Initiative, received special funding from the FAO, including for kitchen construction and equipment and school gardens, but the training was available for all (*The Voice* 2015). In December 2015, a delegation of FAO, Brazilian and Caribbean officials met in St Lucia to view the two pilot schools and assess the School Feeding Programme; as a result of its success more countries decided to join, including Grenada (FAO 2015b). St Lucia also seconded a member of the organisational team to the OECS to assist it in spreading the programme to other member states by sharing St Lucia's experiences.

While St Lucia followed the Brazilian model in many aspects, it adapted the programme to suit local conditions and challenges. The main difference was the use of the private sector to boost funding and support – this was done in recognition of the fact that it was not possible at that time for the St Lucian government to cover all costs of the programme (as was the case in Brazil). For example, in 2015 the main electricity provider, LUCELEC, invested EC\$77,000 in the Vieux-Fort Primary School to refurbish the kitchen and also to fund a breakfast programme (Government of St Lucia 2015e). Likewise, in 2016 the Vieux-Fort Lions Club provided funding to two other schools in the district to cover the cost of the meals for one day per week (*St Lucia Times* 2016). Supermarket chains and small businesses also assisted through the HOOPS programme (Helping Out Our Primary and Secondary Schools) (Int.#44.SL). The involvement of the private sector was described as “very, very, very effective” due to their assistance in keeping the programme afloat financially, as well as playing an accountability and quality assurance role as schools needed to show the money was well spent (Int.#36.SL). The success of this aspect was attributed to a strong sense of corporate social responsibility in St Lucia and that it provided an opportunity to generate good public relations (Int.#46.SL). The contracts for these partnerships were three years

in length, but due to the positive response it seemed likely they would be extended; more companies had also asked to become involved (Int.#44.SL).

Overall, St Lucia's experience with the School Feeding Programme and particularly Brazil's involvement seemed positive and was not only showing signs of success within St Lucia but was encouraging others in the region to join and follow suit.

The Grenadian model

Grenada officially became involved in the School Feeding Programme in early 2016, a year after St Lucia. While St Lucia had a long history of providing some form of school meals, Grenada had less experience and the existing model was limited; further, the Grenadian government seemed less committed to the programme. However, there were previous examples of FAO cooperation with Grenada in this area: the FAO provided some short-term funding in 2011–2012 for a cooking competition and recipe book development to encourage school meals; and in 2013 a representative from Grenada gave a presentation at an FAO meeting in Barbados to highlight the dire state of Grenada's programme and their need for help in this area (Int.#47.Gr).⁹⁷ In 2014 a vulnerability study was carried out with the help of the FAO and Brazil (which funded the study and provided a consultant), and in 2015 a report was released highlighting the problems of poverty and vulnerability in Grenada and how a strengthened School Feeding Programme was one means of tackling this issue (Dottin 2015a, 2015b).

In June 2015, representatives from Grenada took part in the trip to Brazil to see the programme, and in December a delegation visited St Lucia to witness their particular approach and how it might be repeated in Grenada. Also during that year, a Brazilian nutritionist visited Grenada and assisted in drawing up a menu guide and recipe manual using local ingredients and methods (Cameron 2015).⁹⁸ As in St Lucia, a committee was formed to oversee the project, including representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture and Education, the Food and Nutrition Board, and school principals. In 2016 the programme began its implementation phase with five pilot schools. The Food and Marketing Board became involved by playing a centralising role between local farmers and schools – the board bought the produce

⁹⁷ The representative described this as “embarrassing” but that it needed to be done in order to show the truth (Int.#47.Gr). This representative had been working on this programme for many years and it seemed largely due to her passion that it was gaining momentum.

⁹⁸ This guide was incredibly detailed and provided a meal plan for a month, with all recipes included, as well as nutrition guides and cooking instructions.

from farmers and distributed it to schools – so supply and demand could be met more consistently across the country throughout the year (Int.#37.Gr).

The Grenadian model was designed to cover all state primary schools and pre-school institutions (including childcare centres) but it was not universal at the time of research – it was only available to “vulnerable” children,⁹⁹ not all students (it was hoped this would change in the future, although it was stated it would never be universally free due to a lack of political will, as well as capacity) (Int.#47.Gr). A lack of funds was an ongoing problem for Grenada during this period as the 2014 IMF agreement involved significant spending cuts and left little space in the budget for such programmes (as discussed in Chapter 5). Hence, part of the funding for the programme during 2016 was from the PetroCaribe social funds, discussed further in Chapter 7 (Government of Grenada 2015a, 2016a). Brazil had also provided loans so Grenada could buy more advanced agricultural machinery to develop a wider scope and amount of produce throughout the year (Int.#37.Gr). Despite St Lucia’s success in gaining private sector support, it was stated that this was unlikely to occur in Grenada due to a lack of interest in these projects, as well as the expectation that this was the government’s responsibility; however, attempts were being made to encourage businesses to “adopt a school”, the results of which were yet to be seen at the time of research (Int.#47.Gr). As such, while there was much hope and enthusiasm by some parties, overall the future of the programme in Grenada seemed uncertain due to both a lack of political support and funding.

Brazil’s role in the School Feeding Programme through the FAO and via funding for training and technical assistance was described by participants as appreciated. The impact of Brazil’s involvement was viewed as both practical – due to the financial assistance in providing training and travel funding – and inspirational in being able to see the possibilities of what can be achieved when a government invests in such a programme to the extent of Brazil. However, the School Feeding Programme was also an example of the ripple effects of SSC that can occur when multiple parties share experiences amongst themselves. In this case, in much the same way that St Lucia was inspired by Brazil’s example, Grenada was inspired by St Lucia’s example:

⁹⁹ The process of classifying children as “vulnerable” was rather vague and included children noted as having had low birth weights (hence they entered the programme young and tended to remain on the list), recommendations from people in the community who noticed children who needed help, or parents could ask for their children to be involved (Int.#47.Gr). Due to the *ad hoc* nature of this system, it seemed likely some children might fall through the cracks.

“For us in Grenada it was a more realistic model because with Brazil, Grenada can fit into a little patch of Brazil so, you know, you can come back and say ‘oh this is Brazil, they have all the resources, they can do things’. But with St Lucia, the economy, the status of the economy, topography, geography – it’s so much like Grenada, so we think ‘if St Lucia can do it, we can do it’.” [Int.#47.Gr]

It was clear why countries were eager to join this programme and learn from Brazil’s success – over the long term it has benefits for public health and education, revitalises local farming and lowers import costs. It can also help to reduce poverty by taking the pressure off poor families to provide lunches, and increase employment by creating jobs in school kitchens and more stable work in agriculture – both of which are significant problems for St Lucia and Grenada, as discussed in Chapter 5. That Brazil implemented this programme on such a grand scale was viewed as inspirational and made it seem attainable to participating countries. It was also designed to be a sustainable programme – once training was provided and capacity improved, it was domestically driven using local resources and knowledge; hence even if the programme ended or was diminished these skills could not be taken away. The programme was also adaptable to local conditions and flexible in its implementation. That Brazil’s role was facilitated through the FAO also helped to ensure its continuation, as it was not as dependent on Brazilian government preferences as may be the case with bilateral projects. As such, the UNOSSC appeared correct in highlighting the School Feeding Programme as a positive example of SSC and the significant, if modest, impact it can have.

Sustainable cooperation but disappointed hopes

Brazil’s engagement in SSC with the Caribbean, and St Lucia and Grenada specifically, was indicative of its SSC approach during this period. It involved expanding its physical presence in the region via the opening of embassies and deepening its relations via numerous meetings and visits that encouraged greater dialogue with partner countries. The technical cooperation it undertook was frequently based on the sharing of successful programmes implemented in Brazil, whether in agriculture or education – as seen in the School Feeding Programme. These played to Brazil’s strengths and highlighted the usefulness of SSC in tackling common problems with proven solutions. This focus on training and knowledge sharing was also viewed as sustainable (as it was not based on continued financial support that could become scarce over time), as well as adaptable to local conditions. While Brazil did provide some funding regarding travel costs and providing experts, its use of multilateral support through the FAO meant the costs

were largely borne elsewhere and in that way were less likely to be impacted by political change. Further, the use of the FAO showed how Brazil could embed itself within a multilateral institution through leadership and promoting programmes based on Brazilian experience; as such while the School Feeding Programme was under an FAO initiative it was heavily connected to Brazilian involvement and its success could be seen also as Brazil's success. This was therefore an effective means of expanding Brazil's influence outside of the more labour-intensive and expensive process of implementing bilateral projects.

There were some concerns and potential problems, however, with Brazil's SSC programmes in the Caribbean. First, while they had opened embassies throughout the region and could claim a presence in every country in LAC, it appeared these embassies could be given conflicting information from Brasilia and little support (as seen in the stalling of the OECS cluster programme once it had been announced). This leads to the second issue of a sense of disappointment with Brazil for seeming to promise more than it could, or would, deliver. As this research covers both the rise and relative decline of Brazilian SSC (marked largely by the departure of President Lula in 2011), this disappointment mirrors these shifts. That this problem was also raised in the international observer interviews in Chapter 4 suggests it was not specific to the Caribbean experience and was a widespread perception. The impact this might have had on Brazil's potential as a SSC norm leader is discussed in Chapter 8, specifically how this relates to the principles of solidarity and partnership.

CHAPTER 7

VENEZUELAN SSC IN THE CARIBBEAN: OIL AND DOLLARS

Venezuela's increased relations with the Caribbean under Chávez played a key role in its foreign policy. Due to its large Caribbean coastline as well as established relations with the region, it was in a strong position from the outset to become more involved. Further, as with Brazil, the Caribbean islands provided a number of potential allies to bolster support for Venezuela; they were also strategically located to provide a buffer zone between Venezuela and its stated "enemy" to the North – whether this was a successful strategy is discussed further in Chapter 8. The Caribbean was therefore a significant area of Venezuelan SSC activity during 2005–2016, and had many partners eager to participate in its programmes, as seen in the high membership numbers from the Caribbean for both ALBA and PetroCaribe. Venezuela's closeness with the region was not without tension, however, as territorial claims, ideological differences and loyalty to organisations such as CARICOM and to other Caribbean states were balanced against the significant need for Venezuela's help.

This chapter examines the SSC conducted between Venezuela and the Caribbean during this period, specifically St Lucia and Grenada. In contrast to Brazil and its focus on technical cooperation, much of Venezuela's SSC involved financial assistance via loans, grants and oil financing, as well as access to social programmes. SSC was provided at a bilateral level, as well as through PetroCaribe and ALBA. The first section explores Venezuela's general relations and increased involvement with the region during this period, before looking specifically at the bilateral SSC projects it conducted with St Lucia and Grenada. In reference to Chapter 2's descriptions of the workings of ALBA and PetroCaribe, it examines how St Lucia and Grenada interacted with these organisations.

Venezuela in the Caribbean: Building on a long history of positive relations

Venezuela had long been involved in the Caribbean prior to the 2000s. As such, when it significantly expanded its presence in the region under the Chávez Government, an ongoing relationship already existed on which this could be built. Venezuela was one of the first nations to provide its support as the various islands gained their independence and were also quick to form diplomatic ties and

establish embassies across the region. Venezuela also has long relations with regional organisations of the Caribbean – it joined the CDB as a non-borrowing member soon after its establishment in 1970 (Ewell 1984) and has had observer status in CARICOM since 1991 (Maher 2004). Another example of Venezuela's early assistance was through the rescue of the local airline, LIAT, in 1974. LIAT was originally owned by a British company, Court Line, that went into receivership and ultimately collapsed, at which point Venezuela stepped in and offered a loan that would keep the airline afloat until the CDB could take over the loan and stabilise the company (David 2013; Int.#41.SL). Considering the region's transportation challenges, Venezuela's assistance was greatly appreciated.

These long-standing ties with Venezuela resulted in friendly relations that also held a personal connection for many people who experienced first hand Venezuela's presence in the Eastern Caribbean:

"Venezuela has always been a country with a footprint in the Caribbean. I remember growing up being a student, the first and only embassy I recall at that time... was the embassy of Venezuela... I myself I remember doing a competitive exam and being sent off to Venezuela for a few months to do Spanish language. They've always had the Institute of Venezuela on islands giving courses, teaching people Spanish, talking about the culture and so forth. So it has been a social and academic partner... over many decades." [Int.#26.I-Dip]

This statement is indicative of how Venezuela was actively involved in the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean, providing training and encouraging cultural cooperation since the 1970s – in this way, engaging in SSC long before its more contemporary incarnation under Chávez. Although not naïve to Venezuela's geopolitical interests in the region, Venezuela was described here as "a friend" as well as a "partner" due to this long history, which provided a solid foundation for 21st century relations.

As such, when Venezuela began a new era of cooperation with the region under Chávez, it was generally felt that this was in many ways a continuation of the goodwill Venezuela had long shown. It also explained why much of the Caribbean was eager to sign up to PetroCaribe and ALBA, whether as original/early members or eventually. While there was some concern over Chávez's more radical leftist politics and apprehension of US backlash (Int.#43.Car), this was ultimately overcome by the pragmatic nature of Eastern Caribbean foreign policy that made states reluctant to pass up beneficial opportunities. The concern that Venezuela would spread its political ideology via SSC was also described as unfounded. Due

to the failed socialist experiments during the 1970s/80s that resulted in the Grenadian invasion, it is was clear that the region was reluctant to experiment with socialism anytime in the near future – and in the case of Grenada, it was stated as impossible:

“Grenada has no intention of going socialist, never will, we’ve tried that and there would be no support for taking the country back in any direction that sounded remotely like that. But to join with others in addressing social and other concerns that we are part of, shared vision for what this Bolivarian initiative could be for trade and development and poverty and so on, we want to be part of that, but we are not part of the ideology.” [Int.#33.Gr]

Hence, the small states of the Eastern Caribbean during this period were eager to balance support for Venezuela’s more inclusive development agenda without embracing the radical politics of Chávez. However, there were benefits to be had by participating in Venezuela’s geopolitical goals – that is, to rebalance the region and challenge US hegemony – as if successful it would give these small islands a greater global importance not seen since the Cold War days, and might translate into more assistance from a variety of old and new partners as they compete for influence (Jessop 2015; *St Lucia Star* 2015a). Hence, while Venezuela had strategic reasons to gain the support of Caribbean states for its own protection and to boost its global agenda, these states also had significant reasons to form alliances that had practical and strategic meaning in both the short and the long term.

A concern that was expressed, however, and caused some anxiety amongst those who raised it, was in regards to the two territorial claims that Venezuela has made within the Caribbean region. The first is a claim of up to two thirds of Guyana and the second is Venezuela’s claim to a small land mass off the coast of Dominica called Bird Island or Aves Rock – see Box 7.1 for a timeframe of events of these claims. While not widely discussed by interviewees (especially Bird Island), those who did mention these claims showed genuine concern over Venezuela’s long-term plans for the region and the possibility of placing those states closely allied through membership in PetroCaribe and ALBA in a difficult situation should Venezuela become more aggressive on this issue. President Chávez was eager to let these disputes lie and was able to control the groups that were committed to pursuing the Guyana claim; however, President Maduro either lacked the political will or strength to restrain these factions, which resulted in the flare up of tensions once more in 2015 (Sanders 2013b).

Box 7.1: Venezuela's territorial claims in the Caribbean

Guyana claim

- 1824 Venezuela gained independence from the Spanish, and claimed that the land west of the Essequibo River in British Guiana was also part of Venezuelan territory.
- 1899 London and Caracas reached an agreement under the International Arbitral Awards and the land was recognised as part of British Guiana (although this was not fully accepted by all Venezuelan factions).
- 1962 Venezuela declared the 1899 Treaty void and returned to its pre-1899 claims.
- 1966 British Guiana gained independence from Britain and became Guyana, and a Mixed Commission was set up to address Venezuela's claims to the now-independent territory. Also this year, the Venezuelan military was accused of carrying out incursions of Guyana's territory.
- 2007 A group of Venezuelan soldiers entered Guyanese territory and destroyed two dredges. The actions were unsanctioned by the Venezuelan government, which apologised for the incident.
- 2013 The Venezuelan Navy intercepted the *Teknik Perdana*, a ship flying the Panamanian flag that was hired by the Guyanese government and the Anadarko Petroleum Corporation to carry out seismic investigations in Guyanese waters.
- 2015 March – ExxonMobil began offshore oil exploration after signing an agreement with Guyana to this effect in 1999.
May – ExxonMobil announced that it had found massive offshore oil and gas deposits. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro demanded the drilling stop and claimed that the area in dispute rightfully belonged to Venezuela. It was stated that “Caracas potentially owes ExxonMobil US\$1.1 billion as a result of World Bank arbitration award relating to expropriated assets”.
July – Tensions were heightened with President Maduro accusing Guyana's President of attempting to “divide the Caribbean”, who responded by stating that Venezuela's claim constituted an “act of aggression”. Caracas recalled Venezuela's ambassador to Guyana, and announced that it would not renew a rice trade agreement with Guyana, set to expire in November.
October – Guyana called for CARICOM's support on this issue, largely in response to President Maduro's visit to the region that was viewed as a means to build support.
- 2016 The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon pledged to assess the Venezuela/Guyana border dispute before leaving office, and stated that Venezuela and Guyana would be granted one more year of mediation to settle the dispute before being referred to the International Court of Justice at the end of 2017.

Sources: Sanchez 2015; *St Lucia Star* 2015c, 2015d; *Jamaica Observer* 2016a, 2016b; Jessop 2015.

Bird Island claim

Bird Island is a small land mass located 140 miles west of Dominica and 340 miles north of Venezuela. It is 375m long and 50m wide; it rises only 4m above sea level and so is often submerged. The island has been contested for over two centuries by colonial powers, the US and Venezuela due to its location and possibilities of maritime claims. The size of the island has significantly diminished over time due to erosion and hurricanes, and the island is now considered a rock by the UN Law of the Seas. This is disputed by Venezuela, which wants it to be considered an island, as this classification impacts greatly on surrounding maritime claims. It is suspected that Venezuela believes there to be oil or minerals of value in this part of the Caribbean and is hence eager to have ownership over this area.

In 2011, a wikileaks cable revealed that Dominica had ceded Bird Island to Venezuela during a 2006 CARICOM meeting. Following this meeting Venezuela promised Dominica US\$29 million worth of aid, prompting the claim that Dominica had used this as a means to gain assistance from Venezuela, knowing that Dominica's claims to Bird Island were unlikely to succeed. Whether this fully resolved the issue is unclear.

Sources: *Dominica News Online* 2011; Int.#41.SL; Int.#42.Car.

CARICOM and its members have been clear that they will always support Guyana on the border dispute, despite any connections they may have with Venezuela – although what would happen if this were fully tested cannot be known. That Guyana and Dominica are both members of PetroCaribe was said to contribute to keeping relations open, even at times of tensions, and was viewed as a positive means to maintain peace (Int.#27.I-Dip). The claim mentioned in Box 7.1 that Bird Island was used by Dominica as somewhat of a bargaining chip in an exchange for aid adds a different dimension to Venezuela's claims of SSC as done without expectation of return, and seems to suggest the territorial concerns of Caribbean states may not be unfounded. This suggestion as well as the fact that Venezuela has continued these historical claims over such a long period raised the suspicions of some leaders in the Caribbean as to Venezuela's motives in the region (Int.#43.Car). However, if this was the ultimate goal of Venezuela in the Caribbean – that is, to claim territory – it went to extraordinary lengths to do so and, hence, while it may be one piece of the puzzle, it seems unlikely to have been Venezuela's only motivation. An apposite reason for wariness, as suggested by one stakeholder, could be the possibility of Venezuela using this issue as a means to distract its own population from domestic concerns:

“One should never rule out the fact that one day in Venezuela things may be so bad that some leader will stand up and say in order to turn the attention away from the problems at home says that two thirds of Guyana is ours and we're going to march in and take it.” [Int.#41.SL]

Should this be the case, however, it seems they would face significant problems within the whole LAC region as a result, not just with the small Caribbean islands.

Venezuelan SSC projects: Energy assistance and social missions

As discussed above, Venezuela has a long history of good relations and assistance projects in the Caribbean. However, the focus of this research is on the SSC programmes that formed (or were continued) under President Chávez, covering the period 2005–2016 – the most significant of which were the creation and implementation of PetroCaribe and ALBA. While much of Venezuela's SSC over this time was channeled through these two organisations, Venezuela also engaged in some bilateral SSC.¹⁰⁰ The following sections therefore discuss the relations between Venezuela and St Lucia and Grenada, before moving on to more specific examinations of PetroCaribe and ALBA.

Venezuela–St Lucia cooperation

While St Lucia had historic links to Venezuela in a similar way to other Caribbean states and had a Venezuelan Embassy and Resident Ambassador present on the island since its independence in 1979 (Harris 2001), the closeness of St Lucia's relations with Venezuela since the mid-2000s varied depending on the political party in power. Hence, while St Lucia began the process of forming closer ties with Venezuela by joining PetroCaribe as a founding member in 2005 under SLP Prime Minister Kenny Anthony, when the UWP won the 2006 election negotiations were halted. The reasoning for this was described as largely ideological rather than practical – the UWP didn't want to be associated with socialism and were more focused on traditional partners (Int.#45.SL). Their reluctance was also due to a fear of damaging relations with the US – a fear that reflected a Cold War mentality that seemed to be unfounded, as seen in the continuation of US trade and tourism despite changing relations with Venezuela over this period in other Eastern Caribbean states (Int.#50.SL). Hence, when the SLP came back into power in 2011, it decided there was no danger in establishing relations with Venezuela and that the benefits would far outweigh any potential problems, and therefore joined ALBA in 2013 and activated St Lucia's PetroCaribe membership in 2014 (Int.#45.SL). In

¹⁰⁰ It should be noted that while attempts have been made here to draw lines between what projects could be considered bilateral, or part of PetroCaribe and ALBA, it was not always clear cut. This was due to the possibility that funding had come from either organisation but was not directly a part of the programme; further, Venezuela's structures were not always transparent or clearly documented.

2013, St Lucia appointed its first Non-Resident Ambassador to PetroCaribe and ALBA to oversee cooperation (Government of St Lucia 2013), displaying its commitment to these projects and desire for them to lead to tangible benefits for St Lucia. In cementing these relations, Venezuela also invoked a historical connection with St Lucia in the person of Jean Baptiste Bateau, who is credited with saving the life of Simón Bolívar in 1816 (Int.#39.SL-Ven), thus highlighting SSC's claim as built on common histories and struggles.

The projects directly related to PetroCaribe and ALBA are discussed below; however, there were a couple of examples of bilateral projects between St Lucia and Venezuela over this period. The first was the grant provision of 7,000 laptops distributed to secondary school students in 2014/15, as part of a government initiative to allow students and their families greater access to information technology; a project inspired by a similar programme in Venezuela called the Canaima Educational Project (Government of St Lucia 2014b, 2015a, 2015b). While Trinidad and Tobago had provided the laptops for Grade 10 at a reduced price during the programme's first year (2013/14), and Taiwan provided laptops as a grant the year after (2016/17), Venezuela was especially helpful by agreeing to provide laptops for both Grades 9 and 10 (Int.#44.SL).¹⁰¹ This is an interesting example of a number of Southern donors being called on to assist in one project, as managed by the recipient country.

Another bilateral project was a cultural cooperation programme focused on the St Lucia School of Music. This involved an exchange programme for both students and teachers, in the hopes of strengthening the school and developing local capacity; Venezuela sent technical experts to work with the Ministry of Education to train local teachers so the school could recruit from within St Lucia rather than contracting from abroad. This project was described as a means to develop cultural understanding, and to provide young people with alternative options and activities; it is also an example of Venezuela looking beyond traditional types of assistance, although it does reflect Venezuela's long-term focus on cultural cooperation (Int.#39.SL-Ven; Int.#50.SL). These two examples show how Venezuela engaged in both financial and technical cooperation with St Lucia on a bilateral basis during this

¹⁰¹ The original programme was designed for Grade 10 (the penultimate year of high school) to be given laptops to use in their two final years. However, technical experts advised that the life of the laptops was three to five years and so it would be better to begin the programme in Grade 9. As such, Venezuela agreed to provide two year groups with laptops to establish this cycle (Int.#44.SL).

period. The most significant SSC programmes for St Lucia, however, were derived through ALBA, as discussed below.

Venezuela–Grenada cooperation

Grenada and Venezuela have a long history of positive relations and cooperation, with formal diplomatic ties established when Grenada gained its independence in 1974. Further, the close proximity of the island to the coast of Venezuela led to much immigration between the two countries (Int.#48.Gr). Despite this closeness, however, Grenada exhibited the same wariness as St Lucia of forming formal links with the Chávez Government, and the decision to enter into Venezuela's organisations ran along party lines. In 2005, under Prime Minister Keith Mitchell of the NNP, Grenada became an original member of PetroCaribe, although they did not sign up to ALBA at that time.¹⁰² When the NDC came into power in 2008, they were concerned about damaging US relations and so did not consider joining ALBA; however, as the benefits of PetroCaribe were already being seen, as discussed below, they continued the programme (Int.#55.Gr). A further reason for delaying membership in ALBA was due to reluctance to engage with a socialist agenda that brought back memories of Grenada's own history with the left and its aftermath. However, when the NNP won the 2013 election with a total mandate, practical concerns ultimately prevailed over ideological considerations and in December 2014 Grenada joined ALBA. As stated in a local newspaper article at the time:

“Following a particular political ideology as the norm for Grenada is a waste of time... Grenada is too small and underdeveloped to play big power politics... Presently, Grenada is excluded from NAFTA and the only alternative is to join ALBA in the interest of the Grenadian people.” (George 2014)

That is not to say that Grenada blindly accepted or was uncritical of Venezuela's positions – an open letter in a Grenadian newspaper detailing concerns of press censorship in Venezuela was an example of this (see Deloire 2014) – however, Grenada was eager to assert its sovereignty for the benefit of its people, and this was also expressed and debated in the local press as well as in government (see *Grenada Informer* 2015a), as is usual in democracies.

¹⁰² As the NNP represents the centre-right party in Grenada, it is interesting that they were more willing to join PetroCaribe and ALBA, and thereby draw closer to leftist Venezuela, than the centre-left NDC party. This further shows the pragmatism that drives many of these small Caribbean islands.

As part of these renewed relations some bilateral SSC projects with Venezuela took place over this time, frequently in the form of large financial grants to support infrastructure projects. While most developing countries are eager for this type of support, many of these infrastructure projects were required due to the substantial damage caused by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. For example, in 2006, Venezuela provided US\$30 million that was used as follows: \$5 million was allocated to the Grenada Youth Programme; \$5 million for housing materials assistance; \$10 million for the Hospital Project; and \$10 million for the LaCalome Housing Project in St David (David 2013). Venezuela followed this with a grant in 2010 of US\$6.1 million to be used for rebuilding St George's Market Square, refurbishing the Tanteen Pavilion in St George's and reconstruction of Angel Pan House, construction of a community centre and pavilion at both St Patrick and at Mont Toute, repairing roads and the Ford Bridge in St Andrew, and continuing work at St George's General Hospital (David 2013). The Ford Bridge, St George's Pavilion and St George's market were completed in 2012 (*Caribbean News Now* 2012b) (see Appendix 5 for images of the signs that recognise Venezuela's role in funding these projects). In 2013, Venezuela also provided Grenada with US\$11 million to be used for budgetary assistance through the ALBA Bank (note this was before Grenada officially joined ALBA) (Government of Grenada 2014).

As mentioned above, some of these funds went towards the St George's Hospital Project, which proved to be a complex and political undertaking with many delays – see Box 7.2 for details and timeframe of events. This project is indicative of the changing political relations with Venezuela over this time as different parties came into power, and is also an example of how Venezuela provided some of its SSC projects by providing funding to pay its own contractors, although it seemed local labour was used. As discussed in Chapter 1, tied aid is not disallowed in SSC so this was not a problem; nonetheless, this did not appear to be the standard practice of Venezuela as other projects were carried out by local contractors. This project is discussed further in Chapter 8, particularly in relation to the role of M&E in SSC.

Box 7.2: Venezuela-Grenada cooperation – St George’s hospital

Timeline of events:

- 1999 – Cuba provided engineers to design and plan the US\$20 million hospital. The hospital was completed in 2003 and Cuba provided doctors and physicians to staff the hospital for its first three years.
- 2006 – It was announced that a new wing at the St George’s General Hospital would be built with Venezuelan assistance. The project would involve refurbishment of the former Eye Ward and Ob/Gyn Ward, and the construction of a new wing for Accidents and Emergencies, Laboratory and Imaging, as well as a new Children’s Ward and an Isolation Ward for infectious diseases. This cooperation was likely due to a request from the Grenadian NNP Government under Prime Minister Keith Mitchell, to the Venezuelan Government.
- A Venezuelan construction company, Inversiones 7000 A.C.C.A., won the contract to undertake the work, and the Venezuelan firm Consultant Protelcon of Caracas would provide design and project management services. The Grenadian Agency for Reconstruction and Development would carry out project coordination. Construction began in September 2006.
- July 2008 – The NDC came into power under Prime Minister Tillman Thomas and stopped the project, citing design issues. It was reported that the Pan American Health Organization had found flaws in the design regarding the heights of the roofs and problems with the steel structure and had made recommendations to fix this. It was announced that a new hospital on a different site would be a better alternative. Plans were said to have begun on the new hospital but no progress appeared to have been made after this. Meanwhile, the steel structure of the new hospital wing as already built by Venezuela remained untouched for the next six years (see photograph in Appendix 6).
- July 2014 – The NNP came back into power under Prime Keith Mitchell and announced that the project would recommence. The government stated that it hoped to build a new hospital as suggested by the previous government but wanted to finish this project first.
- 2015 – Construction of the hospital project began once more under the same Venezuelan contractor. This second phase began with \$4 million spent over 2015/16. It was hoped the project would be completed in 2017/18.

Sources: *Caribbean Net News* 2007; Cotman 2015; *SpiceGrenada.com* 2015; Government of Grenada 2016a; Int.#53.Gr.

Grenada and Venezuela also engaged in cultural cooperation during this period, notably through the establishment of the Grenada–Venezuela Friendship Association in 2013 (*Caribbean News Now* 2013a). However, while it was not clear what activities were to be part of this Association, the launch included a call to give Venezuela greater maritime rights in their surrounding waters (David 2013). This took further shape in 2015 when discussions began on Venezuela assisting

Grenada with the development of an oil and gas sector, in the hopes of finding oil offshore. In a rather strange turn of phrase, the former Energy Minister, Gregory Bohen, was quoted as saying in regards to Venezuela: “Our big brother has the knowledge and capacity to help us” (*Caribbean News Now* 2015d). While using familial terms such as brotherhood is not unusual in SSC, the term “big brother” draws uncomfortable connections that were presumably unintentional. It seems these discussions were unsuccessful for Venezuela, however, as Grenada signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding with the British-owned MX Oil to explore within Grenada’s maritime boundaries in December 2016 (Government of Grenada 2016b). Due to the circumstances within Venezuela at that time, this may have been because it was in no position to undertake such work; it could also be that MX Oil provided a better offer that Grenada was glad to take.

It is noteworthy that Grenada received much larger bilateral grants than St Lucia over this time, which may have been indicative of the flow-on benefits of being a member of PetroCaribe. That Grenada had substantial need due to natural disasters may also have been a factor, however.

PetroCaribe

Of all of Venezuela’s SSC programmes in the Caribbean during this period, PetroCaribe was one of the most visible and appreciated. It fell under both a broad definition of SSC (as involving commercial aspects and trade) as well as a narrower one (assistance through grants to fund social programmes), and was an example of Venezuela’s holistic vision of subverting neoliberal ideas within the region by altering the terms of trade. At the time of its offering, the Caribbean states were struggling with high oil prices and Venezuela appeared to be throwing a lifeline that was difficult to refuse. Prior to PetroCaribe’s establishment in 2005, there was a similar programme in place called the San Jose Agreement, an initiative between Mexico and Venezuela to provide assistance to Caribbean states when the oil price rose above \$15 a barrel; it ultimately ended due to Mexico’s oil decline and Venezuela focusing on its own programmes (Maingot 2011). In this way, PetroCaribe was not an entirely novel arrangement for the region and partly explains why 14 countries signed up as original members without hesitation¹⁰³ – it was the continuation and extension of something that already existed.

¹⁰³ These were Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Lucia (although as discussed, they delayed activation of their membership), St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Venezuela.

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the most significant benefits of the programme was the financing aspect that allowed a portion to be used to fund social programmes and repaid as long-term, low-interest loans. Between 2005 and 2014, an average of 50% of member's oil bills were financed in this way, at a value of approximately US\$28 billion; making up an average of 3.5% of GDP for CARICOM members, and 6% of GDP for OECS members (SELA 2015). During this time, a total of 432 projects at a value of almost US\$4 billion were funded through the programme – 34% of this went to public services (such as electricity, drinking water etc), 21% to housing and construction, and 12% to institutional strengthening (SELA 2015). The funding from PetroCaribe via financing and grants far exceeded EU, US and IADB assistance to the region during the first few years of the programme; only remittances were more valuable (Sanders 2008; Girvan 2011b). This financing combined with the grants available and the added funding through the ALBA-Caribe Fund (for members of both organisations), as well as the training and cooperation programmes offered, added up to a package with the potential to be incredibly beneficial to small Caribbean states.

However, due to the decreases in the oil price and political instability in Venezuela since 2013, the future of the programme seemed to be in doubt; there was a reported decrease in oil shipments of 15% between 2012/13 and 20% between 2013/14 (*Caribbean News Now* 2014c), in 2013 the Dominican Republic claimed its shipments had been halved (*St Lucia Star* 2013) and in September 2017 Belize suspended shipments due to unreliable supply (*Belize Breaking News* 2017). Cheaper oil also proved to be a double-edged sword for members states. Lower prices meant less long-term debt and lower upfront payments, but also less financing for social programmes – some of which were essential public services that could only be maintained through this funding. Despite these concerns, member states were optimistic the programme would continue, if only for Venezuela to maintain the market and its investments in the region (Government of Grenada 2015b; Int.#48.Gr).

Grenada's membership in PetroCaribe

Grenada was an original member of PetroCaribe, and in 2006 the government signed a bilateral agreement with PDVSA to purchase 340,000 barrels of gasoline, diesel and fuel oil annually (Wilson 2006). Between 2007 and 2016, Grenada received 2.4 million barrels of diesel at a value of EC\$657.2 million; however, shipments were said to have dropped from 18,000 barrels per shipment to 13,000

barrels since 2015 (Int.#34.Gr). Over this time, Venezuela assisted with infrastructure, and provided an extra storage tank (Grenada's needs were relatively limited in this area, as it was too small to require a refinery etc) (PetroCaribe 2014a).

In accordance with the organisational requirements of PetroCaribe, Grenada set up PC Grenada Ltd, with a board that included government and technical officials, to manage the relations. However, in a somewhat different structure, the Grenadian Government purchased the diesel from PDVSA (Venezuela's national oil company) and in an open bid system sold it to PC Grenada Ltd (while other companies could also bid, PC Grenada Ltd won each time).¹⁰⁴ The fuel was then sold to Grenlec (Grenada's electricity company). Half of the payment was used as the upfront portion to PDVSA and the other half was retained as a long-term loan – 35% of which was given to the government as a grant to be used for social purposes, the remaining 65% was invested so the loan could be repaid over time. Hence, while the government signed the deal with PDVSA, ultimately PC Grenada Ltd was responsible for the repayment of the loan and had to invest wisely (mostly in securities) to avoid unmanageable debt (Int.#48.Gr). By the end of 2013, PDV Grenada's long-term debt to Venezuela reached US\$102.4 million (12.6% of GDP); between 2011 and 2013, annual financing averaged US\$21 million (2.6% of GDP) – due to its importance to the annual budget, repayments were consistently made on time and the IMF was satisfied that the loans were manageable (although it did warn of problems should the programme cease) (IMF 2014, 75).

Between 2007 and 2016, EC\$135 million was provided as a grant to the government, making up an average of 5–6% of each year's budget, and paying for an estimated 40% of social programmes. The money was held in a separate bank account so it could be allocated to the correct projects and tracked when Venezuelan auditors checked the accounts from time to time. If the final amounts came in under the projections, the government was free to keep the leftover funds; likewise, the government made up the difference if more than budgeted was required (*Caribbean News Now* 2014c; Int.#34.Gr; Int.#48.Gr). In 2014, the social grants from this arrangement totaled over EC\$23 million, with most spent on housing, special projects, the SEED (Support for Education, Empowerment and Development) programme, as well as funding for the School Feeding Programme (providing a cross-over with Brazil's cooperation with Grenada) (Government of Grenada 2015a). While the budget projected a similar amount to be allocated in

¹⁰⁴ In other instances, the public body directly bought the oil from PDVSA.

2015, the final spending came in at less than EC\$10 million – a result of the drop in the oil price – with the greatest cuts seen in the Special Projects fund and SEED funding (Government of Grenada 2016a) (see Table 7.1). This shortfall, which resulted from lower PetroCaribe grants as well as less funding from other sources, was partly mitigated by a grant of EC\$40.4 million from the Venezuelan Government (Government of Grenada 2016a) – an indication that Venezuela was eager to continue fostering these relations even as circumstances changed.

Table 7.1: Grenada's use of PetroCaribe funds, 2014 and 2015 (EC\$)

Project	2014 (final)	2015 (est)	2015 (final)
Upgrading of Progress Park	100,000	–	–
Grenada Home Improvement Programme	2,815,338	–	–
Young Entrepreneurs Development Fund	–	500,000	–
Small Economics Programme	–	500,000	–
Roving Care Givers Programme	314,485	450,000	479,163
Bacolet Project (Juvenile Centre)	1,148,466	850,000	437,214
Free School Books Programme	586,011	–	–
Human Resource Development	439,110	1,175,000	625,670
Community Sports Development Programme	96,000	–	–
Rehab of TAMCC Arts and Science Building	–	295,214	280,392
Scholarship Programme	767,346	1,104,786	820,426
Multiple Projects for the Elderly	7,864	550,000	550,000
Special Projects	4,947,169	7,000,000	2,000,000
Needy Assistance Programme	1,836,421	1,000,000	1,984,743
GOG Road Rehabilitation Project (Ccou & PM)	–	400,000	–
SEED	6,658,784	4,000,000	–
Transportation for TAMCC Students	51,000	100,000	–
School Feeding Programme	3,049,999	3,100,000	2,522,189
Uniform and Transportation Programme	516,590	700,000	–
Total	23,334,583	21,725,000	9,699,797

Sources: Government of Grenada 2015a, 62; Government of Grenada 2016a, 115.

Once Grenada joined ALBA, it also benefited from the ALBA-Caribe Fund, and in 2014 it was granted US\$2 million for the urban development of Simón Bolívar Village, as well as funds for the restoration of the National Museum (PetroCaribe 2014a).

The funding provided for the social programmes was a major benefit of PetroCaribe and were it to discontinue then so would many of these programmes that focus on

current needs (eg the needy assistance programme) as well as future development (eg the scholarship programme, and entrepreneur fund). Further, PetroCaribe allowed for cheaper and more available electricity on the island, which was crucial for development:

“Electricity prices would have been astronomical if not for [PetroCaribe]... The main essence of PetroCaribe is to bring electricity to the poorer people... This I can tell you is why over 95% of the homes in Grenada have electricity, it has assisted in getting that done over the past 10 years.” [Int.#48.Gr]

The impact of Grenada’s 10 years of membership in PetroCaribe was therefore viewed as positive, both for the government’s immediate economic situation through direct budgetary support and particularly for the poorer classes who were the main beneficiaries of the scheme through the social programmes and lower energy costs. That circumstances could change, however, was acknowledged and were the programmes to collapse Grenada would be placed in a difficult situation where it might face higher debt repayments alongside the loss of 5–6% of its budget. As is the case for most countries, however, short-term problems tend to trump long-term possibilities, as glibly stated by a Grenadian government official: “There should be concern ... nevertheless in life you have to take risks” (Int.#37.Gr).

St Lucia’s membership in PetroCaribe

As with Grenada, St Lucia joined PetroCaribe in 2005 as an original member. However, as discussed above, due to changes in government it did not activate its membership until 2013; in 2014 it signed a bilateral agreement to receive 1,000 barrels of diesel and 500 barrels of gasoline per day (Frederick 2014). While it was stated that the delay had allowed St Lucia to learn from the experiences of other members, Prime Minister Kenny Anthony, who presided over St Lucia’s original membership and its reactivation (Smith 2013b), stated his disappointment that the previous government had missed out over this time: “Whereas, we could have been benefitting for over five years now, we unfortunately have been without this very beneficial financial facility” (Anthony quoted in Smith 2013a). While there was concern in the media about joining PetroCaribe at a time when Venezuela was in turmoil and the programme’s future was uncertain (*St Lucia Star* 2013; Smith 2014), others shared the Prime Minister’s disappointment, especially after seeing the benefits that other OECS members had enjoyed, such as the housing projects and scholarships provided to Dominica (Int.#44.SL).

St Lucia's membership process mirrored the official structure – a public body (PDV/SLU Ltd), made up of Venezuelans and St Lucians, was set up in 2015 to purchase the oil from PDVSA and sell it on to LUCELEC (St Lucia's electricity provider). However, there were difficulties with the first shipment of oil – LUCELEC claimed the quality was not high enough for their machines and the deal stalled; part of the oil was passed on to the fisherman's cooperative to be used as boat fuel but the remainder was the point of much discussion (Int.#50.SL). This problem was not resolved at the time of research; however, there were deals being made involving the provision of bitumen for road construction through PetroCaribe (*St Lucia Nationwide* 2015c) and the Venezuelan Foreign Minister also visited St Lucia in 2015 to strengthen ties (Government of St Lucia 2015d). Because of these problems and delays, the St Lucian government didn't receive any of the social grant funding that would have been available had the process run smoothly; as such the benefits of PetroCaribe were limited for St Lucia, especially in comparison to Grenada – it appeared to be true that by joining so late St Lucia had missed out.

ALBA

While PetroCaribe was essentially an oil trade deal with a social agenda, ALBA was Venezuela's attempt at integration and cooperation across a wide array of areas, including health, education, culture, sport and media (see Chapter 2), and by 2014 all independent states of the OECS were members. As ALBA entailed an integration project, it is reasonable to question whether the decision of many Caribbean states to join affected their positions or caused tensions within Caribbean organisations. It was stated that while it had led to discussions within the groups, it hadn't led to any major problems; this was mostly because ALBA policies weren't binding and agreements were bilateral (Girvan 2011b, 2011c) and therefore countries could choose how integrated they wanted to be. In the case of the OECS states, all opted out of the political aspect, especially in regards to foreign policy as well as financial integration, and made clear that CARICOM would always come first (Int.#52.Gr; Int.#41.SL). Hence, on the issue of Guyana and the Bird Island claim, members always supported the CARICOM position, as discussed above. While bilateral agreements can be beneficial, in regards to the OECS it was suggested that it may in fact have been better for OECS members to sign up to PetroCaribe as a group rather than individual states, as this would have given them greater negotiating power, especially if terms began to change (Int.#41.SL). However, the likelihood of agreement amongst the members seemed slim and therefore unfeasible,

highlighting the limitations of SSC – even when there is much to gain and countries have common goals, it is still difficult to cooperate.

A stated challenge that arose in regards to ALBA was that it didn't always make clear in its statements which members supported it – it could sometimes look as though all member states were behind the official ALBA position when that was not the case (Girvan 2011c). Further, Venezuela had been accused of using ALBA and PetroCaribe ties to garner support on their issues. For example, a Caribbean newspaper article accused Venezuela of pushing its influence within the OAS when it was challenged on its election monitoring by organising a PetroCaribe speaker to address the OAS before the vote on the issue in the hopes of swaying members of its organisations – the motion to continue dialogue rather than intervene was subsequently approved with only the US, Panama and Canada voting against (*Caribbean News Now* 2015f). While the possibility of Venezuela exerting undue influence over ALBA and PetroCaribe members is a genuine concern, this case seemed to reflect a general reluctance by Latin American states to intervene more so than a sense of obligation, especially considering many of the voting states weren't part of either organisation.

As with PetroCaribe, falling oil prices and domestic problems raised concerns of the future of ALBA since 2013 (Int.#55.Gr). However, in August 2015 a number of new ALBA-funded initiatives were announced for the Eastern Caribbean during a visit by President Maduro, including: the construction of a Pilot Wind Power Plant in Antigua and Barbuda; the construction of a medical centre and agricultural assistance in Dominica; a solar panel project for public schools, as well as housing and habitat projects in St Kitts and Nevis; and the construction and rehabilitation of sports organisations in St Vincent and the Grenadines (*St Lucia Nationwide* 2015a). Whether these projects had ultimately come to fruition was unclear at the time of writing. While the grants and programmes available through ALBA would be missed, unlike PetroCaribe most members aren't dependent on its continuation and so its fading out would be unfortunate but not disastrous for the Eastern Caribbean.

St Lucia's membership in ALBA

St Lucia officially joined ALBA in July 2013 under the leadership of Prime Minister Kenny Anthony of the SLP (*Caribbean News Now* 2013b). The circumstances around this were somewhat controversial as the Prime Minister began to attend meetings in 2012 while denying his intention to lead the country into the group (McDonald 2012). Nonetheless, St Lucia became a full member just over a year

later, which the Prime Minister explained as ultimately the prudent choice for the country at that time:

“In order to survive in a world that hardly knows the value of friendship, be it historical or otherwise, we have no choice but to widen our circles of solidarity and friendship to secure support for our efforts to develop our island.” (Anthony quoted in ALBA-PTA 2014, 28)

By February 2015 it was claimed that ALBA had provided St Lucia with US\$37 million worth of assistance (teleSUR 2015a).

The financial assistance provided through the ALBA Solidarity Fund was obviously one of its major attractions, as the funds were usually provided as grants as requested by members, frequently for infrastructure projects. For example, over 2014/15, at the request of St Lucia, ALBA provided US\$2.7 million to construct/repair three essential bridges – the Rouarne, Demailley and Grande Riviere bridges – that had been destroyed by storms and flooding (Government of St Lucia 2014a, 2015c). The Grande Riviere Bridge was subsequently renamed the ALBA Bridge (see photograph of the plaque at Appendix 7). It was explained that St Lucia was unlikely to have secured similar assistance from Northern or multilateral donors, and if so these would have been in the form of loans rather than grants (Int.#41.SL). As such, the Prime Minister expressed St Lucia’s thanks for the work that came with no conditions:

“I want to emphasize that ALBA has made these funds available without any conditions. They have asked nothing of the Government of Saint Lucia. They did not even ask that the technicians, the steel and cement come from their countries. They came to our assistance without asking for anything in return.” (Anthony quoted in Government of St Lucia 2014a)

It seemed the Prime Minister was attempting to allay the concerns of those who thought Venezuela was using ALBA as a means to exert influence on its members or for its own commercial gain, by emphatically stating how there were no strings attached to this assistance. It is noteworthy, however, that this contrasted with the St George’s Hospital Project in Grenada, discussed above, where Venezuela used their own contractors to carry out the work (Int.#50.SL). In the case of the ALBA Bridge, Venezuela provided only the funds. That the hospital project was provided on a bilateral basis rather than through ALBA may explain the difference; however, it also shows the variety of SSC methods employed by Venezuela.

A further infrastructure programme was announced in 2015 that involved an ALBA grant towards the construction of homes (*St Lucia Nationwide* 2015a); however, it was unclear at the time of writing whether this had been provided or the project completed.

Also through the ALBA Solidarity Fund, St Lucia received a US\$10 million grant towards the NICE (National Initiative to Create Employment) Programme. The programme involved the St Lucian government subsidising the salaries of new employees in cases where the business could not have afforded it otherwise. By 2015, 1,200 people were employed via this scheme, including 400 young people, in roles including agricultural workers, in-home care for the elderly, and numerous types of assistants in schools (including cooks as part of the School Feeding Programme, again showing the links between Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC in St Lucia). A widely-cited example was of a young entrepreneur who had developed a new means to produce coconut oil, and through the programme had been able to hire two employees to assist in building the business (*St Lucia Nationwide* 2015b; Int.#44.SL). The programme was viewed as promising in regards to addressing the problems of unemployment and capacity development – and the funding through ALBA was beneficial in jumpstarting it, although how it could be made sustainable over the long term without these funds required further consideration.

Also in regards to capacity development, in 2015 ALBA granted scholarships for 23 St Lucians to study at the Salvador Allende Latin American School of Medicine in Venezuela (Venezuelan Embassy 2015). The agreement was made between the Venezuelan Embassy and the St Lucian Ministry of Education in 2014 (an example of SSC working outside the boundaries of foreign affairs ministries); the Embassy also agreed to provide intensive Spanish language training for the candidates before the course began (*St Lucia Star* 2015b). The Minister of Education visited Venezuela to see where the students would be trained and was pleased with what he saw, stating: “I know they have their own challenges but the intentions are honourable that they wanted to train medical personnel” (Int.#44.SL). That St Lucia had already successfully engaged with Venezuela and Cuba through the Miracle Mission was undoubtedly helpful in creating goodwill between the two nations, especially in the area of health. By 2014, 10,674 people had had their eye sight restored via this programme (ALBA-PTA 2014) and most people knew someone who had personally benefitted from it over the years. While St Lucia had access to the Cuban programme before joining ALBA, Venezuela’s ability to strengthen the programme led to St Lucians being able to have the surgery at home rather than

needing to travel to Cuba as in the past (Int.#44.SL), and as such Venezuela's involvement in the programme was viewed positively.

Overall, as at 2016 St Lucia's relatively short membership in ALBA had provided tangible benefits in the areas of health, education and infrastructure.

Grenada's membership in ALBA

Along with St Kitts and Nevis, Grenada was the last of the OECS states to join ALBA in December 2014. The decision to join reflected St Lucia's pragmatic reasoning (couched in Venezuelan SSC rhetoric), including that the North was not offering a viable alternative and that ALBA had become necessary for the development of Grenada and the region:

“[ALBA is] an integration movement that today can be considered a culture within the Caribbean and the Americas; an integration movement that is created solely to aid in the development of the region for the benefit of its peoples; an integration movement that seeks to encourage and promote cooperation in the south that is people-oriented, rather than dependent on the traditional north-south mechanisms that are not always geared towards the development of the region and its peoples – especially the poor and working class.” (Prime Minister Keith Mitchell, quoted in *Grenada Informer* 2014b)

Despite Grenada's long history in PetroCaribe, the country seemed reluctant to make this final leap into ALBA. The Opposition were opposed for ideological reasons to do with Grenada's problematic history with leftist politics, and didn't feel there had been enough discussion before the decision was made (*Grenada Informer* 2014a). However, the hesitancy from all parties seemed to be due to the feeling that Venezuela was no longer in a position to follow through on the promises of its organisations, and that the recent troubles revealed other flaws, such as the programme's dependence on one country for survival (Int.#33.Gr).

As such, except for some concessional loans and grants through the ALBA Bank, including a grant of an unstated amount for the construction of schools in 2015, at the time of writing Grenada had not benefitted much from its membership (*St Lucia Nationwide* 2015a; Int.#52.Gr). Joining ALBA seemed a largely symbolic move in the knowledge that tangible benefits, though helpful, may be limited: “We joined ALBA because we believe that any organisation that wishes to strengthen South-South cooperation, we should be part of it” (Int.#55.Gr). That the majority of OECS states were already members also likely played a role. Further, that in 2014 – despite the political and economic turmoil in Venezuela, and a dramatic drop in the oil price –

Grenada decided to join ALBA and St Lucia joined PetroCaribe, shows that Venezuela had managed to retain some goodwill and interest in the region even when its power was fading and looked unlikely to rebound to its former highs.

Generous assistance that outweighed concerns

For the small states of the Eastern Caribbean, the increased level of cooperation with Venezuela during the mid-2000s was a natural extension of decades of good relations. The most significant programme – PetroCaribe – was built on an oil agreement that had long existed between Venezuela and the Caribbean, and bilateral projects reflected the cultural cooperation of the past. As such, with the eventual joining of the majority of Caribbean states to its SSC organisations, the region appeared to provide a much-needed bulwark for Venezuela against its Northern “enemy”. However, many states had significant concerns over the radical agenda of President Chávez and governments were frequently divided down party lines as to whether to draw closer to Venezuela or not, as seen in the examples of both St Lucia and Grenada. Further, once the decision had been made to form closer ties and to join either ALBA or PetroCaribe, Eastern Caribbean states were eager to maintain that this did not mean an acceptance of the ideological aspects of the groups (an issue more relevant in regards to ALBA); this proved difficult to manage as their names were frequently added to policies they didn’t necessarily support. Nonetheless, states such as St Lucia and Grenada tended to be pragmatic in their balancing of Venezuelan relations, and so were forgiving of such infringements.

The reason to allow some leeway in the relations was primarily due to the significant benefits that countries received via Venezuelan SSC from 2005–2016, whether through bilateral projects or ALBA/PetroCaribe membership and initiatives. Venezuela’s ability to provide direct grant funding for budgetary assistance and infrastructure projects was unmatched by any other donor in the region (only China offered similar assistance). Further, there was a high level of flexibility in the arrangements and how states used the grants or funding – it was therefore indicative of SSC as being demand-driven and addressing the particular needs of the recipient. It was therefore understandable why many members of ALBA and PetroCaribe were grateful for the support and unwilling to be moved by US criticism of the organisations. They were aware, however, of the challenges associated with these deals, such as the potential for unsustainable debt accrued through the loan terms of PetroCaribe – although the Grenadian experience shows how careful

management could control this. Venezuela's territorial claims in the region were also points of concern for some; despite strong statements on loyalty to CARICOM, should Venezuela become aggressive on these claims many states would be put in a difficult position. Overall, Venezuela played a significant role in the Eastern Caribbean during this period and provided many tangible benefits to states such as St Lucia and Grenada. As with Brazil, the question remains as to how Venezuela used these projects to demonstrate the SSC principles in order to persuade potential norm followers of its value. It is also necessary to discuss what Venezuela gained from these relations as part of the mutual benefit principle. Both of these questions are considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

SSC PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE: TESTING BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA'S RHETORICAL CLAIMS AGAINST ACTION ON THE GROUND IN ST LUCIA AND GRENADA

As discussed in the previous two chapters, the SSC activities undertaken by Brazil and Venezuela in St Lucia and Grenada during the period 2005–2016 varied in method and scope; however, despite some challenges, both tended to be viewed by stakeholders as positive and beneficial in assisting these small islands with their development challenges. A central concern of this research, however, is whether Brazil and Venezuela successfully demonstrated the SSC principles through their programmes and therefore convinced Southern participants to support and follow the SSC norm regime as described in SSC policy. As such, this chapter asks: whether St Lucian and Grenadian recipients identified with the SSC principles as promoted by Brazil and Venezuela; and whether these principles were identifiable in Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC projects by stakeholders on the ground. In contrast to the interview data discussed in Chapter 4, which examined the impact of rhetorical persuasion via interviews with LAC diplomats and Northern commentators, this set of interviews with stakeholders directly involved in SSC activities within St Lucia and Grenada included direct questions regarding the principles and the interviewees' understanding and experiences of each. The interviews therefore contained many comparisons to Northern-led cooperation as a frame of reference.

The chapter begins with some general observations about the interconnected nature of the SSC principles before discussing each principle in turn. The meaning and practical workings of each is first described, before exploring how the Caribbean interviewees' discussed Brazilian and Venezuelan SSC, including whether and how their respective projects were demonstrative of the SSC principles. The two relational principles of solidarity and partnership are first examined, followed by the two practical principles of respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit.

General observations – Trends and connections

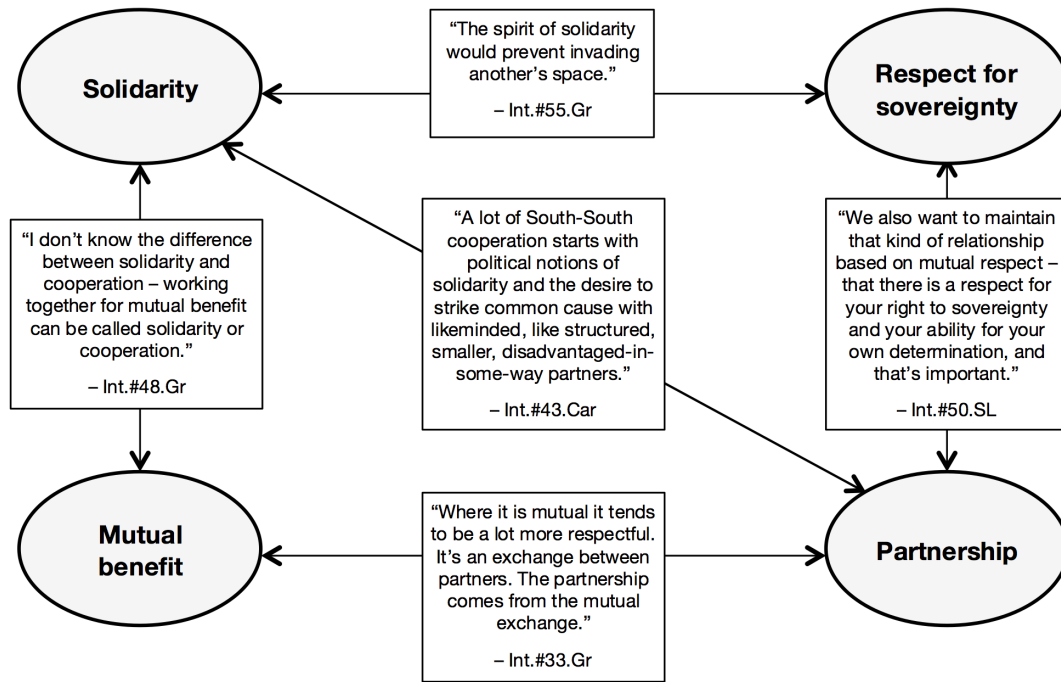
Before discussing each principle in turn, some general observations and comparisons can first be made between the principles and how they related to one

another. Importantly, all of the SSC principles tended to hold some meaning and resonance with most interviewees, and in this regard none were found to be entirely false or without significance.

Looking at the prevalence of the principles, respect for sovereignty was the most emphasised and frequently came up in the interviews before it was directly asked about. This may have been due to it having both a strong emotive element as well as an obvious practical aspect, and as such there were a number of aspects to discuss and more opportunities to raise it during the interviews. Further, as discussed in Chapter 5, the notion of sovereignty holds particular weight for these small islands that have a history of colonial domination and dependence on external assistance, and so feeling as though their independence and sovereignty was being respected was of significance and greatly appreciated. That this was shown through the practice of unconditional assistance was also frequently discussed. The principle of partnership, or “being treated like equals”, was also of great importance to recipients for similar reasons, and was highlighted amongst many interviewees. Solidarity and mutual benefit were also highly regarded; however, they tended to hold greater significance at the higher levels of government than with staff at the project level. That said, these principles seemed to have the most ideological value and were seen as crucial to SSC amongst the interviewees who spoke at length about them.

An emergent theme that could be identified from the interview data was how interlinked the SSC principles were to each other – to the extent that all needed to be present to be truly representative of SSC as a whole, as well as to indicate the presence of each individual principle in a feedback loop. Figure 8.1 attempts to convey this relationship.

Figure 8.1: The circular relationship of the SSC principles



As Figure 8.1 and the quotes within show, in the discussions with the interviewees, the principles of SSC – whilst being important each in their own right (as discussed below) – could be seen as interrelated and overlapping in a way that made it difficult for one to exist without the others. That is, true solidarity between nations was seen to entail a mutual respect or partnership that ensured there was a respect for sovereignty as well as the desire for both nations to learn from one another so both benefit from the exchange. The two relational principles of solidarity and partnership/mutual respect could be viewed as the foundational principles on which the more practical principles of respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit were built. These observations therefore support the premise of this research, as discussed in Chapter 1, that the SSC principles make up a norm regime.

While Figure 8.1 portrays a positive feedback loop in relation to SSC, it was also implied that a negative feedback loop could be established. For example, if there was no solidarity between nations then it would be difficult to have a sense of partnership, and without mutual respect there would be fewer concerns on the part of the donor about intruding on the recipient nation's sovereignty and less of a belief that the donor could learn something from the recipient. This negative feedback loop was apparent in the comments of some interviewees regarding Northern-led cooperation and mistakes of the past (and sometimes present), as discussed below. However, a negative feedback loop was also viewed as possible in Southern relations if parties began to act outside of the principles of SSC.

In light of the above, the below sections examine how each principle was described and understood by the interviewees, and how references were frequently made to the other principles during these conversations.

Solidarity: Southern identity and empathy

The principle of solidarity resonated strongly with many of the interviewees, and especially with those in higher government positions. It was frequently cited as the foundational principle of SSC and held significance on a number of levels – whether relational, practical or rhetorical.

In regards to how solidarity was defined or understood by interviewees, the most common and broad description was that of empathy and understanding:

“You can cooperate with somebody, but if you feel the need of that person or of that country and if you understand what the impact of your cooperation is on that country because of the human condition... then you are engaging in solidarity.”
[Int.#49.SL]

While ascribing feelings of empathy to large state institutions may seem idealistic, what is being described here is in fact reminiscent of the type of assistance provided during humanitarian disasters. For example, when natural disasters occur most governments with the means to help, whether financially or otherwise, tend to provide assistance on the understanding that these types of events can befall any nation. As such, solidarity could be shown to all countries of the world; however, in regards to SSC, it was viewed as referring more specifically to a sense of *Southern* solidarity.¹⁰⁵

Southern solidarity, according to the interviewees, stemmed largely from a sense of commonality and familiarisation – whether historical, geographical, political or circumstantial:

“A lot of South-South cooperation starts with political notions of solidarity and the desire to strike common cause with likeminded, like structured, smaller, disadvantaged-in-some-way partners.” [Int.#43.Car]

Its origin was frequently attributed to a shared colonial experience that resulted in particular development and economic challenges that could best be solved by working together. SSC was therefore viewed as a response to perceived injustices

¹⁰⁵ While interviewees were reluctant to say that North-South solidarity was impossible, most believed it would be difficult due to different histories, challenges and culture, as well as perceived injustices on the part of the North.

and as a means to rebalance global power in the South's favour (Int.#48.Gr; Int.#43.Car):

"There are historical conditions or historical realities that establish many of the problems we have today. And only if there is solidarity among people, we can sort it out and we can arrive to a new situation that is better than what we have today."
[Int.#49.SL]

Related to this, interviewees cited the NAM and Third Worldism as important milestones in SSC, reflecting the long rhetorical tradition of SSC as discussed in Chapter 3:

"South-South cooperation goes back to the days of the Cold War, the height of the Cold War, and the Non-Aligned Movement. That is the basis for South-South cooperation. It was solidarity among countries of the Third World... that philosophical basis has always remained and is still there." [Int.#41.SL]

While the NAM and the emergence of the G77 were significant in terms of Southern nations asserting their own independence and finding strength together, the collapse of the Cold War system and the emergence of new powers was described as a catalyst for the modern form of SSC that grew in relevance since the early 21st century:

"The disintegration of the homogenisation of the western world gives you a flexibility that you didn't have before... the evolution of other third world countries is also critical... and the evolution of China is also critical." [Int.#45.SL]

The variety of development experiences amongst Southern nations, and especially those of the emerging powers (such as Brazil and Venezuela) that have significant resources or during this period reached higher levels of economic development, resulted in a greater ability for Southern nations to share knowledge via SSC and find new heights of solidarity, as it were. That said, the South also became more diverse in a myriad of ways as wealth gaps widened and so there is a danger that these historical roots may lose their impact and this solidarity may waver. However, few interviewees showed concern about this; generally, there was a strong belief in Southern identity and solidarity as a force that couldn't be easily forgotten. Indeed, continuing to use the rhetoric of solidarity was described as a means to "keep the embers of a fire that was lost going, to keep people thinking – 'yes, we are what we are'" (Int.#48.Gr).

Whilst Southern solidarity encompassed all nations of the Global South, the interviews also revealed an LAC solidarity based on history, geography and politics.

The historical element referred to the colonial and post-colonial experience of all countries within the LAC, whether by the Spanish, Portuguese, French, English or Dutch. In terms of geography, the physical closeness within the continent meant the countries faced similar challenges – particularly in regards to climate conditions and disease. However, the proximity of a powerful neighbour to the North and the desire to balance power in the region was viewed as part of this sense of connection. Many countries also shared a history of left-wing politics that still retains some meaning and understanding in the region, even by those nations no longer on that side of the political spectrum. As such, interviewees linked the idea of solidarity with leftist politics and the social democratic ideals of empowering the poor and seeking greater equality within and between nations, regardless of current positions:

“I think [the solidarity] is geographic to some extent and historical to some extent. Geographic because we share that space so we feel that closeness although we are separated by the language and to some extent the culture. And historical because decades ago the kind of leaders that we had in the Americas – Latin and Central, South America – and the leaders we had in the Caribbean, they shared that nationalistic kind of ideal and that kind of thing, which has in some way transcended the region, and so we still feel that kind of solidarity and so on because in those years you had leaders supporting each other across the region because of the anti-imperial, you know all of this kinds of stuff, and so that has contributed to that.” [Int.#52.Gr]

While solidarity between the South and between the LAC countries was seen as having strong relational and ideological foundations, it was also viewed as necessary for these to be expressed through practical actions. As shown above, solidarity can best be seen in the presence of the other SSC principles in the positive feedback loop of Figure 8.1. However, a specific action of solidarity that was mentioned by interviewees was the expectation of support within the regional and international institutions (discussed further below in regards to Brazil and Venezuela):

“Solidarity has a practical meaning – it means support in international institutions on issues that are critical to your friends or allies.” [Int.#45.SL]

“Solidarity is standing with you.” [Int.#50.SL]

In addition to the need for support in Northern-led international institutions, a number of organisations were themselves viewed as expressions of solidarity, including CARCIOM and the G77 (Int.#55.Gr). However, CELAC was most commonly cited as an example of solidarity in the region for its ability to balance relational solidarity with practical notions of support and assistance:

“It’s solidarity, it’s support for issues within the region... Sharing information and common problems, exchanging technical knowledge... we have a lot of technical officers that sit and discuss common problems and share experiences of how different states address problems and we learn from each other that way. So it’s very different from the top-down North-South. And you’re free to say to any members that ‘I don’t think I’m comfortable taking that position because of X and Y’... In CELAC you don’t feel that there is this single political elephant in the room [laughs] that you have to tailor your agenda to. In CELAC everyone makes their contribution, we have discussions, we have disagreements and then come to a common resolution.” [Int.#52.Gr]

This statement demonstrates the ties between solidarity and the other principles, including: partnership – there are discussions and compromise until all parties are happy; respect for sovereignty – no one is forced to support an issue they are uncomfortable with; and mutual benefit – there is knowledge sharing and mutual learning amongst nations. The interviewee also referred to the significance of CELAC excluding the US (the “elephant in the room”) and Canada from its membership and how this is, at least in part, the reason for its success as a forum for genuine discussion and solidarity. CELAC was also described as a way to balance power politics in the region by preventing the US and Canada from having influence in this organisation (Int.#35.SL-Br).

In this way, solidarity in regards to SSC was discussed by interviewees more as a high-level idea used mostly by governments and Southern regional organisations. For example, interviewees involved in SSC programmes on a project level tended to have less to say about solidarity due to a lack of perceived practical implications. It was viewed as something of a rhetorical device that could be utilised by countries to build credibility and a sense of belonging when there may be doubt:

“Solidarity is a principle and at the same time it’s an instrument of maintaining viability and countries want that, and especially large countries want that.”
[Int.#45.SL]

Large regional or global players, such as Brazil or China, are therefore likely to call on solidarity when concerns are raised as to their status. Ultimately, however, if the practical aspects of solidarity (as shown in the presence of the other principles) are felt to be lacking then this claim can be damaging. On the other hand, countries with different historical and cultural experiences can attain this status of solidarity as a result of “good behaviour”. For example, Canada was cited by a number of interviewees as acting in solidarity with the Caribbean due to their non-interventionist stance and ability to treat Southern counterparts as equal partners (Int.#33.Gr; Int.#41.SL; Int.#43.Car; Int.#44.SL). However, longevity was viewed as

key – an established history of acting in the spirit of solidarity was crucial, and negative actions were difficult to overcome. As such, the perceived harsh conditions of the World Bank and the IMF in their lending practices and the past intervention of the US were cited as obstacles to solidarity; further, Southern solidarity was viewed as unsuccessful in attempting to alter these institutions (Int.#41.SL).

Overall, solidarity was viewed as a foundational principle of SSC, built on a strong sense of Southern identity and empathy, and the need to work together to solve common development problems and rebalance the global order in the South's favour. While highly rhetorical, it was also seen as necessary to back up the claim of solidarity with action – how Brazil and Venezuela were seen to demonstrate solidarity in their SSC programmes is discussed below.

Venezuelan solidarity – Leading and acting

As discussed in Chapter 3, Venezuela's approach to SSC during this time was steeped in the rhetoric of solidarity, as stated by a Venezuelan official in St Lucia: "It is the key for starting any relations... solidarity is the frame, the first step, the key – the rest is coming" (Int.#39.SL-Ven). Venezuela's long history of cooperation with the Caribbean that predated President Chávez was seen as significant in confirming the solidarity Venezuela spoke so fondly of (Int.#33.Gr); however, it was viewed as closely tied to the leftist politics of Venezuela during this period (Int.#50.SL). Further, Venezuela was seen as a leader in establishing Southern solidarity, and especially within the region due to its involvement in the creation of LAC regional organisations such as UNASUR and CELAC, not to mention ALBA (Int.#55.Gr). Most interviewees therefore believed that Venezuela's engagement in SSC was based on solidarity and a genuine desire to assist countries in need.

Venezuela was also viewed as acting in solidarity by working in partnership with other countries and respecting the sovereignty of all. This was seen especially in the cases of ALBA and PetroCaribe, which fostered mutual respect between all parties, had either no or very low conditions, and focused primarily on assisting the poor. For this reason it achieved solidarity at both the higher government levels and with the public:

"There's a high level of solidarity within [ALBA]. It's very supportive of each other's challenges and so on... even the programmes under PetroCaribe, social programmes, are geared towards improving the lives of the average [person]... The people feel that and [it] translates the solidarity that they feel. That's the difference.

It doesn't happen above their heads where they cannot grasp what is happening or what this cooperation is about, they feel it and they see it." [Int.52.Gr]

As well as these programmes having practical and noticeable impacts on ordinary people, Venezuela's focus on rectifying historical and circumstantial injustices and reflecting the original SSC ideas as articulated since NAM were also identified as important aspects of Venezuelan solidarity (Int.#48.Gr). For example, the use of Venezuela's oil resources to attempt to foster more equitable development within ALBA and PetroCaribe, as well as to assist in bilateral projects, were met with positive reception from stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada due to the benefits they received and could be seen as tangible examples of how Venezuela sought to rebalance differences in position. As a result, Venezuela's persistent use of solidarity rhetoric was perceived as founded in history and backed up with action.

As discussed above, solidarity can also be depicted via international support – in the case of Venezuela, this seemed more poignant for gaining such support rather than giving it. That Venezuela did in fact gain support from Caribbean allies, such as St Lucia and Grenada, appeared to be the case, albeit with certain limits (Int.#37.Gr):

"[I]f the government of the United States sought to intervene in Venezuela tomorrow morning, it is unlikely that St Lucia would support that. We might say nothing but in the context of the relationship that we have with Venezuela... There are certain things I could imagine that if Venezuela did then we could not support. But that doesn't mean we condemn them in the loudest voices we have. We might say 'we regret' etc... our position would be that attempts to exert pressure on Venezuela would not be to our liking. We might not be against, but we might abstain." [Int.#45.SL]

While Venezuela's solidarity with St Lucia would likely be repaid by abstention rather than verbal support, this shows the importance of Venezuela fostering solidarity with the region and that solidarity being viewed as genuine and apparent. This solidarity and support could provide a much needed buffer between Venezuela and its "enemies".

Brazilian solidarity – Pragmatic and limited

While Brazil used the rhetoric of solidarity to present its ideas of SSC, as explained in Chapter 3, this appeared to be more limited, more pragmatic and more political than Venezuela, at least within the Caribbean context. A Brazilian official in St Lucia explained how solidarity is restricted by economics, citing the example of

Yugoslavia asking Brazil to purchase train wagons out of a spirit of solidarity during the Cold War – a request that was denied because it wasn't economically efficient:

“So there is no economic solidarity, there is no solidarity which can speak higher than some laws which apply to efficiency... So it had its limits.” [Int.#35.SL-Br]

This much more pragmatic version of solidarity is in marked contrast to Venezuela's claims of balancing the social debt and unconditional giving. While it is difficult to argue that Venezuela's cooperation wasn't strategic in one way or another, it was clear it wasn't solely founded on the principles of market efficiency. Both types of solidarity are useful, however, and Brazil's concern with efficient and financially responsible cooperation led it to focus on sustainable assistance in the form of technical assistance, rather than large transfers and loans that create the possibility of debt as in the case of Venezuela.¹⁰⁶ A representative from the Brazilian Embassy in Grenada discussed the benefits of this strategy:

“It's more responsible than just to give... you recognise that this country has problems in poverty and the solidarity is not to give but to teach, give back, and build something that they really need, because we don't know what they really need so it's about finding this out.” [Int.#51.Gr-Br]

Brazil's involvement in the School Feeding Programme, as discussed in Chapter 6, was an example of how it cooperated with St Lucia and Grenada in a manner that was sustainable, empowering to the poor and left room for flexibility and adaptation. These aspects were cited as positive and indicative of solidarity by staff on the ground in these projects (Int.#47.Gr), and in this way it appeared Brazil had achieved some solidarity with these nations. Further, Brazil's increased presence in the region with the opening of many new embassies was viewed as displaying its eagerness to further relations and foster solidarity with the small nations of the Caribbean (Int.#44.SL).

However, while the School Feeding Programme and particularly Brazil's role in this was praised by interviewees, there was concern that simply opening embassies wasn't enough and that solidarity could be threatened by broken promises and empty rhetoric:

“People are starting not to take Brazil very seriously... They need to be engaging more and they need to demonstrate they are credible.” [Int.#33.Gr]

¹⁰⁶ That Brazil did not have the resources to provide financial assistance should not be overlooked – that is, while it may have been efficient and responsible to focus on technical assistance, it was also what they had to offer.

It was repeatedly stated by officials within the St Lucian and Grenadian governments that Brazil was a relatively new player at this time, and hence they did not have the historical goodwill of Venezuela to fall back on if things became more difficult (as became the case by the end of this research). As explained in Chapter 6, there was generally understanding of changes in circumstances and the need to scale back; however, there was less understanding of promises being made that could not be kept (Int.#41.SL). In Brazil's case, it seemed especially important to remember that solidarity is not maintained simply by being Southern, but by backing this up with action.

Solidarity as a lofty but necessary ideal

Solidarity was described as the foundation of SSC. As a relational principle it was referred to as being based on empathy and understanding – as well as a sense of Southern identity and its related common problems and challenges. While this aspect related largely to how parties “felt”, it was also noted as necessary to be demonstrated in actions of support and goodwill or else solidarity could be lost. While solidarity was described as connected to lofty ideals of working together and global rebalancing, within the confines of political positioning and economic efficiency – as in the case of Brazil – it appeared to lose its romanticism. Further, solidarity was shown to have limits, as seen in how St Lucia would respond should Venezuela be threatened. Of all the SSC principles solidarity can be viewed as the most rhetorical and designed to evoke feeling – but in international relations this seems somewhat out of place, particularly in comparison to the tangible principles of respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. In this sense, solidarity may be seen as a relic of the left with little modern meaning. However, as discussed above, most interviewees did engage with the notion of standing together in solidarity and seemed confident that it was a necessary part of 21st century SSC. Both Brazil and Venezuela were perceived as having demonstrated solidarity in their SSC programmes – whether through Venezuela's perceived generosity via ALBA and PetroCaribe or Brazil's technical cooperation and expanded presence in the region – although this was noted as contingent on continued good behaviour. As such, solidarity held genuine meaning in Southern imaginaries and was viewed as an integral part of SSC.

Partnership: Equality and respect

Like solidarity, partnership can be categorised as a relational principle as it concerns how the parties “feel” about the interactions within the cooperation;

however, it was also described as having tangible qualities that indicated the presence of partnership, such as increased dialogue and flexibility. The concept of partnership within SSC – or cooperating on the basis of mutual respect – held significance throughout the spectrum of interviewees, whether in the higher levels of government or at the programme level, and drew strong comparisons with Northern-led assistance that was perceived as lacking in partnership.

In describing partnership, interviewees generally stated that it referred to mutual respect, that there must be friendly relations, and all contributions should be valued (Int.#52.Gr; Int.#37.Gr):

“South-South – it’s more friendly. You’re treated more as equal partners. It’s a more equal kind of relationship.” [Int.#41.SL]

The ability to maintain this mutual respect was often brought back to the concept of a Southern identity based on commonality (as with solidarity) that led to more natural relations than those with the North:

“The North is pretty advanced to us... you’re finding that we’re more and more comfortable with South... I think it’s because there are more common problems, the similar situation and also our proximity, we’re very close to each other... The North is a little removed, we have different cultures and backgrounds.” [Int.#36.SL]

The importance was not placed on countries *being* equal, but rather *feeling* and *being treated* as equals in SSC relations, despite the acknowledged differences between Southern states:

“We don’t feel as though we are any less because of size or capacity or GDP or Development Index. I think that’s the difference with South-South cooperation. We know that there are asymmetries there but it is not apparent, it is not on the table so to speak.” [Int.50.SL]

“Yes, the way it is discussed or talked about, you are given the respect that you are on equal footing with them, even if you are physically and otherwise much smaller, but you are still treated as a country which they will not push around. That is the key difference in a sense, a critical difference in South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation. That heavy-handedness... that has been apparent in North-South relations, that is not there in South-South cooperation.” [Int.#41.SL]

This equal treatment was particularly important to St Lucians and Grenadians, as two nations almost guaranteed to be smaller and less powerful in virtually every way compared to other nations of the North and South. As the statement above shows, this respect was perceived as lacking in Northern-led cooperation, which made it

more greatly appreciated within Southern relations (Int.#33.Gr; Int.#43.Car; Int.#55.Gr).

In regards to the practical implications of partnership, or how partners could be “treated like equals” and with respect, a number of actions were suggested. The first was that partnership created more space for dialogue between parties (Int.#50.SL; Int.#41.SL). As one interviewee explained, this can result in a chain reaction: with more dialogue both at the onset and throughout the project, there was more space for flexibility and two-way collaboration, which led to more relevant projects that tended to be more impactful (Int.#33.Gr). This was seen in contrast to North-South relations that tended to focus on “creating guidelines that are designed to trip you up” rather than working together to tailor a project that can adapt to local conditions and has room to move as it progresses; genuine dialogue also allowed countries to express “what they wanted”, rather than being told “what they needed” (Int.#33.Gr).

Secondly, partnership appeared to be manifested in respect for sovereignty, as mutual respect would prevent undue intervention and attempts to pressure governments to take certain positions (Int.#41.SL; Int.#50.SL). Finally, partnership was also linked to the principle of mutual benefit – if both parties were willing to learn from the other and see value in their contribution then there tended to be more respect:

“Where it is mutual it tends to be a lot more respectful. It’s an exchange between partners. The partnership comes from the mutual exchange.” [Int.#33.Gr]

The need for practical applications of partnership was highlighted by one interviewee in the example of China and their building of an athletics stadium in St George’s, Grenada.¹⁰⁷ While it was stated there was much dialogue, it was felt there was a lack of flexibility in their approach. As the Chinese were insistent on using their own contractors and workers, there was less knowledge transfer and local participation than would have been desirable. However, it was stated that the Chinese were responsive to these concerns and demonstrated they could “tweak” agreements to address the issues raised (Int.#33.Gr). This example shows that simply identifying as Southern and engaging in dialogue doesn’t necessarily lead to true partnership. It also shows the difficulties of not having mutual exchange within

¹⁰⁷ The project was completed in January 2016 and was funded by the Chinese government at an expense of US\$25 million (Niland 2016).

the cooperation and thereby having a more obvious donor/recipient relationship. As such, there is reason for concern that as the differences between the emerging powers and the rest of the South grow, it may be more difficult to retain a sense of partnership within SSC, as discussed in relation to Brazil below.

Brazilian partnership – Overcoming inequalities

Due to the wide discrepancies in population and geographic size, as well as substantial differences in wealth and power, the principle of partnership was discussed more fully in regards to Brazil's relations with the small islands of St Lucia and Grenada than Venezuela. Discussions focused on how Brazil maintained a sense of equal partnership despite the fact that it was much larger and was also providing more in the exchange – or as one interviewee put it: “Brazil versus the Caribbean is almost like a mini North-South, right?” (Int.#43.Car). This statement highlights how Brazil (and other large Southern states) must work to overcome these divisions if they are to maintain their Southern identity and retain the goodwill of the South. At the time of research, however, Brazil was still viewed as Southern due to the significant development challenges it faced, which “balanced the scales”:

“While geographically there's certainly the appearance of a David and Goliath relationship, the reality is that, certainly from our perspective in the Caribbean, when we hear of Brazil, no matter how developed Brazil may be or may be moving ahead, people still think of Brazil as third world you know. Because at least up until recently some of our indicators were better than theirs, social indicators were better than theirs. Some of the programmes they've done for example with support to education at a community level, getting kids in schools and the universality of basic education. We were far ahead on these indicators so there wasn't that sense. Although Brazil was massive, there was still a feeling that well there's a level of equality among us, because you may be bigger than me but I am better in some respects. So that has balanced the scales.” [Int.#43.Car]

As Brazil continues to develop, however, and become more powerful on the global stage, fostering a sense of partnership is vital to ensuring Southern countries don't start to view it as too different. Hence, it was stated by Brazilian representatives in St Lucia and Grenada that Brazil was keen to foster relations that weren't intimidating to prevent the possibility of imbalance (Int.#35.SL-Br; Int.#51.Gr-Br). When St Lucian and Grenadian interviewees were asked whether it was possible Brazil could lose its Southern identity as it grew more powerful, the response seemed to be that this wasn't a concern: “Because that's not their philosophy, they don't believe that” (Int.#55.Gr).

Generally, St Lucian and Grenadian interviewees were positive about Brazil's attempts at partnership as shown through its SSC projects and felt it had been successful in achieving a sense of mutual respect. This was largely because it had displayed two of the practical applications listed above – namely, respect for sovereignty and dialogue. For example, it was explained how Brazil did not make demands or have certain expectations because it had provided assistance – that is, it respected the sovereignty of its partners:

“[W]e are not dictated to on any given issue... [S]ometimes you will get aid [and] because of who you get aid from you know that later you're going to be asked to do something – that is not the modus operandi of South-South cooperation.”
[Int.#52.Gr]

“Yeah, [Brazil] is a big player, but it has not imposed itself in the way that the US has. At least here, I don't know about the immediate South American region, but certainly it's not seen as a big power that wants you to tow the line politically.”
[Int.#41.SL]

Further, Brazil was described as eager to engage in dialogue to discover the priorities of its partners so relevant programmes could be offered or discussed (Int.#52.Gr). The School Feeding Programme was viewed as particularly successful in fostering partnership for this reason. St Lucia initially requested to take part due to a need in this area and interviewees were pleased with the dialogue as shown in the many meetings and training sessions carried out with Brazil, as well as their experiences of being treated well throughout the process (Int.#50.SL). It was explained that these aspects of the cooperation went a long way in creating a sense of partnership that continued throughout the programme:

“The orientation was very good, travelling... they made us very comfortable... we had VIP, red-carpet treatment. We arrived and the entire Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, all their staff – they were all lined up outside the building waiting to welcome us. They prepared breakfast and there was so much food, a nice spread, we got lovely gifts to take home, they had a nice ceremony, it was really, really nice... It feels like a genuine partnership.” [Int.#47.Gr]

It was also appreciated that the programme was flexible – for example, school menus could be adapted to make use of local produce and there was space to incorporate local businesses in the case of St Lucia; that the Brazilians were open to adaptation and eager to learn from other experiences was also viewed positively and showed the value of mutual exchange as part of the partnership (Int.#50.SL; Int.#47.Gr).

Overall, Brazil seemed to be very successful in matching the rhetoric of partnership with the necessary actions to back up the claim, and had thereby, in the opinions of the interviewees, overcome the challenges of inequality of size and power.

Venezuelan partnership – History and dialogue

In regards to Venezuela, the principle of partnership wasn't emphasised as strongly as the principle of solidarity amongst the interviewees. This wasn't because it was seen as unimportant or lacking but rather, due to Venezuela's long history within the region, it could almost be taken for granted. For example, it was stated how mutual respect had always been present in Grenada–Venezuela relations, long before the PetroCaribe deals and so these "roots and ties" contributed to the friendly relations existing within the time period of this study (Int.#48.Gr). As such, while Brazil had to work to ensure partnership was maintained and imbalances were corrected, Venezuela had only to ensure its history of good relations was continued.

The structures and processes of ALBA and PetroCaribe, as well as the bilateral projects Venezuela had engaged in with St Lucia and Grenada, were described as demonstrating that mutual respect and partnership were present and valued in these organisations. For example, the amount of meetings and discussions on the programmes, and the ability to speak up when there were statements or proposals that countries were uncomfortable agreeing to or signing were highlighted as showing the good relations within the groups (Int.#50.SL). Of course, it had not gone unnoticed by member states that Venezuela was the main contributor to ALBA and PetroCaribe and hence the relations had always been unbalanced (Int.#45.SL). As described in Chapter 7, Venezuela's programmes were usually based on the partner country either requesting a programme or the acceptance of an offer made by Venezuela – the ALBA Bridge in St Lucia and the infrastructure projects in Grenada are bilateral examples of this process, which can be seen to demonstrate the practical application of partnership as based on dialogue that results in impactful assistance. As such, Venezuela was viewed as maintaining a sense of partnership and gained the respect of St Lucia and Grenada as a result (Int.#48.Gr; Int.#44.SL; Int.#50.SL).

It should be noted that while Brazil had to work to foster partnership by ensuring a respect for sovereignty and some type of mutual exchange, Venezuela was viewed as a partner without mentioning these aspects (although dialogue was highlighted). As discussed below, these principles were present to varying degrees, they just weren't tied to partnership in the case of Venezuela. As such, it shows how a history

of partnership can allow the more practical actions to be overlooked or rather assumed; although, this goodwill has limits and would be negated by a perceived lack of partnership over time.

Partnership as essential and effective

Based on Southern identity and the common challenges faced by the South and the need to work together to overcome these, partnership and mutual respect appeared to be of great importance to St Lucian and Grenadian interviewees. This was in part because it evoked a sense of goodwill amongst the parties but also because it was seen as leading to, or reflected in, a greater respect for sovereignty and more flexible and effective cooperation. As such, partnership was viewed as essential to SSC and a defining factor that distinguished it from many Northern-led cooperation relations. Venezuela's long and positive history within the region proved a valuable foundation to maintain its sense of partnership, and at the time of research had allayed concerns that the imbalances within ALBA and PetroCaribe could lead to domination by Venezuela. In regards to Brazil, its focus on partnership had helped to overcome inequalities within SSC and it was perceived that even as Brazil grew in power it would maintain its focus on mutual respect.

Respect for sovereignty: Respecting and increasing Southern independence

The principle of respect for sovereignty was raised and discussed the most of all the SSC principles during the Caribbean interviews, and seemed to hold significance on an emotive level as a means of showing respect, as well as on a practical level as it was said to lead to more efficient and effective cooperation. As discussed above, respecting another nation's sovereignty was also viewed as closely connected to the principles of solidarity and partnership, and was often seen as an expression of those principles. As such, respect for sovereignty was perceived as a cornerstone of SSC, without which the use of the term "South-South cooperation" would not be appropriate.

Showing respect for another nation's sovereignty is an international principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,¹⁰⁸ particularly the right to self-determination, and as such it holds an important place in international relations and

¹⁰⁸ Article 1(2) states: "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace."

is thereby not a unique idea to SSC. However, respect for sovereignty was viewed as particularly important for the small islands of the Caribbean, with moral reasoning attached:

“It’s certainly transactional to a significant extent but also there are some issues that can be considered moral issues often to do with sovereignty, which particularly the English speaking Caribbean feels strongly about.” [Int.#42.Car]

Considering the histories of St Lucia and Grenada (discussed in Chapter 5) as two colonies passed between England and France and then sitting within the US’ “backyard” since independence, as well as the economic reality of needing to look externally for the means to survive, it was not surprising that feeling respected and in charge of their own development and political choices was of substantial value: “The underlying principle of the South is that each country has a right to determine its own destiny and it should never be dictated to by anyone” (Int.#55.Gr). This was made more of an issue in development assistance due to a perception that Northern-led cooperation was viewed as sometimes infringing on this sovereignty:

“The issue of respect for sovereignty has to do with the fear or the stigma of ‘I don’t want to relate to that person because he or she might want to dominate me’... He who pays the piper wants to dictate the tune.” [Int.#48.Gr]

While this was unwelcome in and of itself, it was also seen as potentially leading to hypocrisy. For example, this issue was raised in regards to the allegations of police brutality and human rights abuses in St Lucia and the subsequent withdrawal of US assistance to the police force.¹⁰⁹ That the US would be so quick to condemn another country for police brutality whilst in the midst of their own troubles in this area was a point of concern (Int.#44.SL). It was also commented by a Brazilian representative to St Lucia that the Northern Ambassadors who met with the Prime Minister to admonish him on not acting decisively on this issue were out of line and that “in other countries, this will not be accepted”; further, he questioned whether this was a case of “taking advantage from the fact that there is a dependence from St Lucia on them” by unduly intervening in domestic affairs (Int.#35.SL-Br).¹¹⁰ That

¹⁰⁹ This relates to the case of 12 St Lucians being shot and killed by the police during 2010–2011. The victims were alleged to be on a “death list” of suspected criminals and so the police were acting without due process and in violation of human rights. The killings occurred under the previous Prime Minister; however, the current Prime Minister, Dr Kenny Anthony, was being criticised for not doing more to prosecute the case. See *Aljazeera America* 2016.

¹¹⁰ The representative was not stating that there should be no accountability for human rights abuses, but that it would have been more appropriate for a multilateral body that has responsibility for such matters to conduct an investigation rather than the US acting on a bilateral basis.

this is true is difficult to dispute – since independence, St Lucia and Grenada have been dependent on Northern powers for assistance and had little choice but to accept it with whatever conditions it contained. However, SSC and its emphasis on sovereignty, with its increasing visibility and practice since the mid-2000s, provided an alternative that could not only alter the terms of assistance but increase Southern sovereignty overall. In this way, it was perceived by interviewees as connected to the larger pursuit of a multipolar world, which was described in SSC rhetoric (as seen in Chapter 3) as a key element of SSC in general and for Brazil and Venezuela specifically:

“But there are huge opportunities and you see to the extent that we engage more in South-South cooperation you really create an economic basis for true sovereignty because then you reduce your dependence and you’re not being locked into the economic hegemony of any North-South construct.” [Int.#43.Car]

“In that respect, the size and significance of a country like Brazil and now Venezuela as well has a meaning, has a geopolitical meaning – there’s an alternative. It gave these small entities a certain identity of relationships that secures its independence. The dependence is balanced as a function of geopolitics but also as a function of trying to engage in policy which you can autonomously undertake even if the west doesn’t like it or appreciate it.” [Int.#45.SL]

This sense of increased independence was, however, based on Southern donors demonstrating the practical implications of respect for sovereignty – it was not enough to be another option but to be a genuine and different alternative. As such, the most mentioned practical element of respect for sovereignty related to conditionality, and specifically the understanding that SSC came with less conditions than Northern-led cooperation (Int.#42.Car; Int.#52.Gr). It cannot be said that SSC came with no conditions whatsoever – there was usually the expectation that should support be required then that would be appreciated – however, these were never seen as conditions that could be demanded when the time came (Int.#52.Gr). While this issue of providing international support was described as a significant aspect of SSC, and perhaps reason for SSC (as discussed Chapter 2), this was the only expectation talked about regarding the question of sovereignty. That is, the conditions along the lines of requiring certain governance changes or budgetary concessions that were present in Northern-led cooperation, especially during the era of structural adjustment in the 1980s, were never on the table in SSC and demanding such conditions, it was suggested, would disqualify a nation from claiming to be working within the parameters of SSC (Int.#55.Gr; Int.#49.SL; Int.#50.SL).

Another key practical aspect of respect for sovereignty was in how countries related to one another. It was stated that unlike in Northern-led cooperation, in SSC requests were always respectfully made and not demanded, and that it was never appropriate for a nation to tell you to support or not support a third nation (the example was cited that should the US pressure Grenada to not support Venezuela then that would be “presumptuous and inappropriate”) (Int.#55.Gr). Southern partners were also said to be respectful if the recipient declined to give its support as each country was free to make its own decision (Int.#44.SL; Int.#55.Gr).

Finally, reference was made to the need for local ownership of projects in order for them to be sustainable and successful, and that this was also a sign of respect for sovereignty. It was believed that freedom and flexibility in choosing projects that were more relevant to the recipient nation were more likely to be effective; it also showed greater trust in the partner country – something perceived as lacking in some Northern-led cooperation (although not all) (Int.#50.SL). However, it was also stated that this was as much the responsibility of the recipient country as the donor, regardless of whether it was SSC or Northern-led cooperation:

“How many times have we seen these big, massive structures, what we call ‘white elephants’. And you ask, ‘But why did you build this thing there? And why is it not in use?’ Because somebody sat in some office and felt that this is what this country needs. So it’s a failure on their part and it is also a failure of even the recipients in terms of we asking and we knowing what we want for ourselves.” [Int.#50.SL]

Major Southern donors, such as Brazil, were also eager to avoid this type of situation by encouraging greater dialogue initiative from both parties, saying that recipients “have to be more proactive, to take responsibility for their own projects” and identify their own needs so they aren’t pushed into inappropriate programmes (Int.#51.Gr-Br). As such, if both partners showed respect for sovereignty during discussions and follow-through, hopefully this would result in more effective cooperation.

Venezuelan respect for sovereignty – (Mostly) unconditional assistance

Since Venezuela’s increased involvement in SSC under President Chávez, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 7, there was concern that this was done in an attempt to exert influence on these countries and turn them towards a radical left-wing agenda in line with Venezuela’s own political leanings – and in this way could be viewed as intervening. However, interviewees within St Lucia and Grenada were

adamant that this wasn't the case and that Venezuela had never asked for anything in return for their assistance or pressured governments into leftist policies:

"I have been asked that question many times as the Ambassador to PetroCaribe and ALBA. Will you or are you forced into signing something, believing in something? And I made it very clear in the number of meetings that I have attended, I have never been forced into something. And this is not just me speaking now because I have to say this, no... But again, there is the respect for sovereignty, you know. Are we communists? Are we socialists? There is no country within the region, one can identify as being a communist or a socialist country... No one is saying to us you cannot have a relationship with the United States of America. No one can do that to us either." [Int.#50.SL]

"I think Venezuela had been tremendous in what it has provided to our government and they have not really asked for anything." [Int.#44.SL]

That said, Venezuela itself was clear that this does not mean it's writing blank cheques, as a Venezuelan representative in St Lucia stated:

"We respect the sovereignty of every country and so we offer things to all of them, and the Government of St Lucia and other governments can decide what to do and take some or everything. [In PetroCaribe] we have rules of how the oil is paid for, we have rules of the game because not everything can be a grant – we have the rules and you accept the rules; if you decide to come with us, you accept the rules and in 20 years you pay me. We have a lot of respect but with the rules." [Int.#39.SL-Ven]

The rules referred to here are the bilateral agreements signed with each member state, which contained the terms of the loans and were likely the closest attempt at conditional aid that Venezuelan had shown – that is, the condition within PetroCaribe that the grants provided to government from the financing element of the oil agreements must be used on social programmes.¹¹¹ However, as discussed in Chapter 7, this condition was described as having a high level of flexibility and freedom in what these programmes could entail and also how any leftover money could be spent:

"There's no expectation... nobody tells you write a project to justify it. You are at liberty to project your budget and use the money. That is another advantage of it. So if in some years your expenditure ends up being lower, you keep it." [Int.#48.Gr]

While this freedom was appreciated, it must be remembered that these grants were in fact debts that could pose difficulties in the long term, especially if Venezuela calls in these debts early. Further, these continual loans through PetroCaribe could

¹¹¹ See Chapter 7 for a full discussion on this process.

be viewed as establishing a relation of dependence of these small islands on Venezuelan oil and funding, which is problematic should these deals collapse but also puts them in a difficult position should Venezuela become more demanding in desiring their allegiance. For example, Venezuela's territorial claims in the region, as discussed in Chapter 7, were viewed as a potential point of concern. However, the Eastern Caribbean's allegiance to each other and also to CARICOM was described as steadfast, and that Venezuela understood this – as one interviewee stated in regards to ALBA: “Venezuela has a respect for the sovereignty even when ALBA has entwined them in these relationships” (Int.#41.SL).

As described above, Venezuela fostered a high level of dialogue within ALBA and PetroCaribe and ultimately showed flexibility by using bilateral agreements tailored to each relationship rather than universal terms. While many of the projects undertaken in St Lucia and Grenada involved untied cooperation (such as the ALBA Bridge in St Lucia), the St George's hospital project did see the use of Venezuelan contractors (although it appeared local labour was used). It was not clear whether this was viewed as a problem, although other issues were raised, particularly in relation to M&E, as discussed below.

Overall, Venezuela was perceived by interviewees as demonstrating a strong respect for sovereignty in all its dealings with St Lucia and Grenada, despite the possible long-term impacts of debt and dependence.

Brazilian respect for sovereignty – Practical and assumed

Brazilian representatives in St Lucia and Grenada stated that Brazil had always respected the sovereignty of all states and SSC was no different (Int.#35.SL-Br; Int.#51.Gr-Br). Likewise, due to Brazil's positive history in this area, interviewees believed Brazil would be very hesitant to intervene in local matters or make unreasonable demands as it hadn't done so in the past: “You don't expect of Brazil, for example, to be annoyed with you for voting against sanctions against Cuba... they don't intervene” (Int.#41.SL).

The means by which Brazil went about its SSC activities was viewed as making it easier to maintain a respect for sovereignty – that is, assistance was mostly given at the request of the recipient nation and it was always non-financial, as such there was little room to overstep the boundaries or set conditions, as a staffer on the School Feeding Programme commented: “Nothing was imposed, they were just showing what they have and there was freedom to change the model and get

support for that” (Int.#47.Gr). Further it was noted that in the School Feeding Programme each country was encouraged to use local produce in the meals rather than importing foreign ingredients (Int.#51.Gr-Br). This was stated by a Brazilian official as intentional as they were careful to be flexible to local conditions in all their projects so as to not create dependence, as “that’s how you colonise” a country (Int.#51.Gr-Br).

Overall, there was little discussion on respect for sovereignty in regards to Brazil as it was strongly believed by interviewees that it wouldn’t intervene or make unreasonable demands, and based on its use of technical cooperation it would be very difficult to impose conditions.

Challenges to the principle of respect for sovereignty

While the above discussions on respect for sovereignty have focused on the positive aspects that might suggest it can be found in all types of SSC, there are challenges to this principle that must be considered. As discussed in Chapter 5, sovereignty is something of an illusion as no country exists in isolation and all need to cooperate within their region and beyond. Hence compromises are necessary and unavoidable (Int.#45.SL). This is particularly the case for the small Eastern Caribbean islands – that is, while SSC provides the small states of St Lucia and Grenada with more options, it still remains that they are dependent on external assistance for their survival and Northern-led cooperation remains necessary. For example, despite Venezuela’s significant grants and loans, Grenada had little choice but to agree to an IMF package due to its dire economic circumstances as a result of a devastating hurricane in 2004 and the GFC of 2008 that prevented recovery. Even though the package was proudly referred to as “homegrown”, it mirrored official IMF policy in its calls for liberalisation of key sectors to shift control to the private sector, reduced government spending, and raising taxes on the lowest income bracket and small businesses.¹¹² In the area of substantial funding and lines of credit, at the time of research the South had yet to provide a fully-fledged alternative that had the means and the credibility to provide an alternative to the international financial institutions (whether the New Development Bank or, more

¹¹² See IMF 2014. This example highlights the importance of “feeling” as though there is sovereignty versus there actually “being” sovereignty. The Grenadians wrote the programme in such a way that they knew it would be approved by the IMF; however, the fact they wrote it and it wasn’t imposed on them seemed to make all the difference – even though the outcome would likely have been the same in either instance.

likely, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank reach this level is yet to be seen). The Grenadian government was fully aware of this situation, as one official stated:

“The IMF is not the first point of call but the IMF has strategic importance so when the IMF approves and endorses an economic path everyone else falls in line... if the IMF says that Grenada’s programme is good and is being managed properly all the other institutions recognise that.” [Int.52.Gr]

As credibility can take many years or decades to attain, it appears likely that small Caribbean nations will continue to face a lack of options for the foreseeable future.

One reason given for why SSC wasn’t perceived as invasive or exerting too much pressure on recipients was that it was relatively small in scale and provided by countries that don’t yet have the means to provide a real threat: “Let me put it this way, Venezuela could not come in here with its troops, the US could” (Int.#45.SL). As such, perceived restraint could be viewed as due not to ideological factors but rather material ones and the consequences that would follow. Hence, as the emerging powers develop and increase their global presence this may change. While this seemed to be in the distant future for Brazil and Venezuela, in the case of China this was already viewed as a factor to consider due to the sheer size of their resources and growing interest in almost every region of the South (Int.#42.Car). Further, as Southern donors gained in power so might the pressure to fall in line with Northern donors and bring in conditionalities to their programmes, which Northern donors were viewed as eager to encourage:

“[O]ne of the elements of the dialogue with the Chinese and with the Brazilians... is to say for the Caribbean or whatever is to introduce conditionalities. If you are sitting in Beijing or Brasilia, you would say it its precisely because there are no conditionalities that we offer something different.” [Int.#42.Car]

As recognised in this statement, it is the lack of conditions in SSC that makes it significantly different to Northern-led cooperation – further, it is what makes it SSC. As such, should Southern donors abandon this principle, recipients would see this as a betrayal not only of the principle of respect for sovereignty but also the principles of solidarity and partnership with which it is inherently linked. Hence, abandoning the principle of respect for sovereignty would be tantamount to a Southern donor stating it no longer engaged in SSC – this does not make it impossible but should provide an incentive to continue speaking and acting in line with this norm.

As a result of these factors, sovereignty within SSC will always be somewhat rhetorical, as any type of cooperation includes an element of intervention – the difference is in the extent. SSC has claimed it includes space for greater sovereignty, as shown through its practical applications and lack of conditions. However, this also leaves room for criticism as conditions are often added to ensure money isn't wasted or stolen. As such, M&E is a continual challenge for SSC and the principle of respect for sovereignty, and therefore warrants further discussion.

Monitoring and evaluation – An unwanted intervention or a necessity?

A persistent criticism of SSC, especially from Northern donors, has been that not enough attention has been paid to M&E, which can lead to a lack of accountability and the potential for wasted spending and ineffective programmes (as discussed in Chapter 1). This concern is justified, as M&E within SSC has not been as comprehensive as in Northern-led cooperation. This has been due to a few reasons, including the significant practical challenges of lack of resources and institutional power required to carry out lengthy and expensive M&E processes. It is expected that as Southern donors become more developed in their foreign assistance activities and taxpayers demand more accountability for spending overseas this may change. Interviewees were also eager to include M&E within SSC programmes in order to learn from experiences and seek improvements:

“I think accountability is important. Because at the end of the day somebody's money is being used, some tax payer from somewhere and we have a sacred responsibility to account for how it's used. And to always ensure even if something may have worked well and the experience has been positive, that is not to say that it could not have had an even greater impact had certain changes been made. So I think it's just not about resting on the laurels of success and say well we've done this initiative and it's been widely successful. We still have a responsibility to interrogate how we did it and what were the results, and ask ourselves for the next round or in future are there lessons from this that would make us do it differently and better... it doesn't happen always in countries of the South, in fact in some cases none of this happens. But certainly that's the ideal to which we are working hard to establish. So trying to build knowledge management as part of the DNA of the organisation. [Int.#43.Car]

However, Southern recipients also stated that they were grateful for the less onerous M&E of SSC projects due to the belief that cooperation can be more effective and financially efficient when large amounts of money and time don't have to be spent on monitoring, follow-up and expensive consultants (Int.#33.Gr; Int.#50.SL). This was also related to the principle of partnership in that recipients felt there was more trust and ownership when there was less external M&E (Int.#50.SL).

As such, the topic of M&E was a contentious one when raised with interviewees in St Lucia and Grenada, as recipients, while aware that M&E should be strengthened in SSC, were eager to make sure it didn't take on the problems of Northern monitoring and could thereby maintain the aspects that had made it faster and more efficient:

“Yes, the monitoring and evaluation frameworks needs to be strengthened but they have to be strengthened in a way that doesn't diminish the advantages which South-South cooperation at this time has over its counterpart in terms of cooperation between South and North. In short, yes put in instrument, yes let's agree targets and process but, for the love of God, don't do it so that we need an army of people to get it done so that they draw from the same limited resources or that it goes through 100 meetings before you can draw down the resources... so yes we have to find the balance, I don't think we've found the balance yet.”
[Int.#33.Gr]

In regards to Brazil and their M&E processes, the interviewees seemed to feel that there was enough to keep the project on track, but not so much that it halted progress or wasted funds. In fact, Brazil managed to avoid the M&E of its strongest programme in the region – the School Feeding Programme – as this was carried out by the FAO, which was described as having “very strict monitoring” on quality and implementation; further, where the private sector was involved in St Lucia, they were the ones to ensure accountability of their funds (Int.#36.SL). A reason for M&E being less of a concern within SSC, and particularly Brazilian SSC, was also related to the type of cooperation that is commonly provided – technical assistance through the provision of experts – which is easier to monitor than loans and grants (Int.#33.Gr). However, where cooperation becomes more complicated it was noted that there is space for abuse and issues of quality, which must be addressed.¹¹³ Brazilian technical assistance that involved successive meetings and discussions was also seen as valuable in ensuring M&E continued throughout the programme, not only at the beginning and end:

“For example, the school feeding programme... we have had a number of persons coming from Brazil into St Lucia... So that idea of coming in, sitting in, talking, discussing, preparing, conceptualizing and throughout that period of time there is that continuous monitoring and evaluation, it's critical and it is something that is happening and it is necessary for us to achieve what we set out to achieve.”
[Int.#50.SL]

¹¹³ The interviewee alluded to quality problems with the new athletics stadium funded and built by China; however, whether this was fact or conjecture was unclear (Int.#33.Gr).

As such, Brazil was viewed positively in regards to its M&E practices and providing a suitable balance of accountability and trust.

In regards to the M&E as carried out by Venezuela, this had mixed reviews. As discussed, the monitoring of the PetroCaribe social funds appeared to have a level of M&E built in, while also maintaining relative freedom in spending. When asked whether Venezuela monitored these funds, it was stated:

“Definitely... [Venezuela] has auditors that go around to check what [governments] do... to the extent of the technocrats that I would work with they are very, very interested in knowing how [the money] is channeled.” [Int.#48.Gr]

Venezuela also engaged in infrastructure programmes, which were generally seen as of high quality and well carried out, even if there did not appear to be a formal process of M&E; for example, the ALBA bridges in St Lucia were noted as able to withstand the damaging storms that washed away the old bridges (Int.#50.SL). However, problems regarding M&E were raised in relation to the St George’s hospital project (see Box 7.2). The project halted suddenly in 2008 when a new government came into power, citing design issues discovered by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). This obviously raised issues of quality and proper monitoring; however, in this instance it was very difficult to discern whether the project was stopped due to a lack of M&E or simply due to political changes. The M&E of the project was described as under the purview of the Grenadian government through the Ministry of Works, and the Venezuelan government, besides funding the project, was relatively hands-off. When pushed on what the “design flaws” entailed, an officer from the Ministry of Works emphasised that they were functional rather than structural; however, if the PAHO really did find problems with the steel structure (as listed in Box 7.2) this points to larger issues with monitoring. Unsurprisingly, when asked who was at fault for the design problems, the officer was reluctant to give an answer (Int.#54.Gr).

This example revealed a trend concerning M&E within SSC – it tended to be the responsibility of the recipient nation rather than the donor. Likewise, while the Brazilians were involved in their technical assistance programmes, the ultimate responsibility for how the knowledge and advice was implemented was with St Lucia and Grenada. Hence, generally the onus was on recipients to make the most of any assistance received and ensure it leads to results:

“I think we have a different approach and it is the right approach. We are saying that, yes it is good to give to my country, but when I walk around, when I look

around, I am asking the question... Where is it? The key is ownership. It's my project. Yes it is funded by Australia, by Europe, by Canada, by Brazil, Venezuela, but it is my project. It is something that I took part in conceptualizing, in implementing and I can deal with it. So when the donor country or agency says 'Bye', they are leaving with that level of assurance that when I leave, I don't leave with all of the knowledge, somebody can continue. And this is so critical for countries that are recipients of donor funds. Because of the scarce resources that are available right now countries cannot afford or have that luxury of just giving away financial support like that. It is important for them and also important for the countries who are receiving the funds to ensure that there is proper management of whatever is available to them. They haven't got much left. The kitty has dried up. Countries now have to concentrate on their own people." [Int.#50.SL]

Overall, M&E was recognised as an important and necessary part of any international cooperation, and that balance must be struck in SSC of ensuring funds are properly used while respecting a nation's sovereignty.

Sovereignty as a right, an expectation and a challenge

Respect for sovereignty was viewed by interviewees as central to SSC – to the extent that should this principle be lost, the cooperation could no longer be called SSC. This principle was described as demonstrated through unconditionality, dialogue and the local ownership of projects. It was also seen as important as a means to increase the independence of nations such as St Lucia and Grenada by providing an alternative to Northern-led cooperation, as well as a means to alter the global status quo by increasing Southern sovereignty overall. Both of these noted elements reflect SSC rhetoric and that of Brazil and Venezuela in their claims that SSC is part of the larger goal of establishing a multipolar world and rebalancing power to the South. Respect for sovereignty was assumed in the case of Brazil due to their means of cooperation as well as their history of non-intervention. Venezuela, however, showed signs of intervention via its conditions in PetroCaribe and the dependent relationships it had formed with St Lucia and Grenada. Despite this, interviewees believed Venezuela had a strong respect for sovereignty and had, so far at least, never overstepped its bounds. However, of all the principles, respect for sovereignty raised some of the most pertinent challenges for SSC. The most significant of these was the question of how to improve M&E processes within SSC – which was viewed as generally positive – without unduly infringing on a nation's sovereignty via onerous reporting demands, as had previously been perceived in Northern-led cooperation. How to balance monitoring and efficiency was considered an important and necessary challenge moving forwards. Ultimately, no state is entirely independent and all countries relinquish some sovereignty in the

process of cooperation – in this way, sovereignty is largely a rhetorical device, albeit one that holds particular meaning and reverence within the South and in SSC.

Mutual benefit: Empowering the South

The principle of cooperation resulting in mutual benefit for both parties was viewed by interviewees as vital in SSC as it signaled a break from Northern-led cooperation where one party was viewed as the donor with much to give and the other the recipient with little if nothing to offer (Int.#52.Gr; Int.#33.Gr). By including mutual benefit as a guiding principle, it reaffirmed the “cooperation” aspect of development assistance by rebalancing the scales between the parties to be more equal. Further, it allowed all countries, regardless of size or wealth, to feel more empowered – a point that mirrored the international observer interviews, as discussed in Chapter 4:

“It’s less of a one way giving and receiving, and looking really at how you cooperate at different levels... [i]n the traditional or Western cooperation arrangements, on the Western end there’s hardly ever an assumption that we have something to offer. There’s always a sort of imperial posture of, you know, we need to help you and these are the ways in which we can help out. Now to be fair, that is also balanced by the fact that we sometimes ourselves approach this more with a posture of bending rather than the posture to cooperate.” [Int.#43.Car]

In this way, including mutual benefit in SSC exchanges had the ability to change the way the South viewed itself and to consider how Southern countries might take more ownership of their own development in all areas, including trade negotiations:

“[G]enerally when we try to negotiate FTAs we have traditionally seen ourselves as requiring special and differential treatment, we see ourselves as being the weaker party in the negotiations and so sometimes you ask for non-reciprocity clauses and special treatment for the smaller islands but sometimes this is such a defensive position, you don’t really look at it and think are there real benefits in having reciprocity in some areas?... I think the perspective with which you enter these negotiations needs to change.” [Int.#46.SL]

Due to its empowering effects and practical outcomes, mutual benefit was described as the “fundamental difference” between SSC and Northern-led cooperation (Int.#43.Car). An example was given of the Eastern Caribbean providing English lessons to the Cubans as a form of exchange for the many decades of medical support and scholarships. This exchange was the result of effective dialogue, where the OECS asked Cuba how they could assist – hence this case also exemplifies how mutual benefit is connected to the principle of partnership. The mutual benefits continued and created a cycle of exchange – by sending people to Cuba to teach English, the Eastern Caribbean also benefitted by having their

citizens learn Spanish while there. It was also noted that mutual benefit can lead to greater investment in the cooperation – if both parties gain value in the exchange, it is more likely to continue when circumstances change and cuts need to be made (Int.#33.Gr). Further, it was stated that mutual benefit might help to ensure the region developed together and thereby peaceful conditions could be maintained – if dialogue is encouraged and gains are being shared and spread more evenly, then there should be less tension between neighbours (Int.#50.SL).

However, it was recognised that sometimes mutual exchange isn't possible; the example was cited of the economic difficulty of Grenada at the time of research that had prevented it from cooperating to the level it would have liked. It was noted that Southern partners were understanding of the circumstances and were still happy to cooperate with Grenada; however, it was stated that while the North would still be helpful in such a situation, they would not be as respectful (Int.#33.Gr). While this understanding was appreciated, it does show how mutual benefit was, of all the principles, the most likely to be discarded or ignored. This is problematic due to the impact it has on the relationship between the partners – that is, they start to mirror Northern-led cooperation relations and the empowering effect of SSC can be lost. ALBA was raised as an example of this. The group was to be based on equal membership (as far as possible) but Venezuela provided most of the funding and resources and thereby it was highly dependent on one member:

“I think it was not well thought out, I think it was idealistic ... There wasn't sufficient reciprocity built in, which is why where one country that is in fact the major funder, where that country goes into difficulty, the whole initiative goes into difficulty.”
[Int.#33.Gr]

While ALBA is an unusual example due to its integrative structure and expansive programmes, it highlights the difficulties of all development assistance relationships – there is usually a level of imbalance to the cooperation, and while there may be some reciprocity it is rarely entirely equal. A means to overcome this might be by seeing mutual benefit as a principle of averages rather than on a case-by-case basis – as seen in how St Lucia, while gaining knowledge from Brazil in regards to the School Feeding Programme, passed on its knowledge to Grenada and other parts of the OECS. The idea then is that the benefits will come back around eventually even if not in the same transaction. However, while this may be useful in the long term, the reasons for mutual benefit's importance seemed to rely on a more immediate exchange, especially in how it leads to empowerment and greater investment by both parties.

Hence, while it was generally clear what the “recipient” country received in the SSC activity – infrastructure development, financial assistance, technical knowledge etc – the question of concern then was what the Southern “donors” gained in return. It was first important to understand how mutual benefit operated generally in SSC – that is, were the benefits considered and defined within the cooperation or simply implied? The consensus was that while this was never made explicit, there was always the understanding that, should the need arise, the recipient nation would be willing to provide assistance as they were able, as stated in regards to Brazil:

“It is not something that is stated, it’s not something that is conditioned or prescribed. It’s just that when the opportunity arises or the occasion arises where Grenada can contribute to something that involves Brazil then we do.” [Int.#52.Gr]

However, it was also noted that this support was not due to a sense of duty from a prescribed agreement but due to the connection and friendship that had been formed between countries and so it was right and appropriate to reciprocate if possible (Int.#37.Gr). While this refers to a general and open-ended exchange, some SSC appeared to have mutual benefit built in to the cooperation. For example, technical cooperation and knowledge sharing based on dialogue necessarily involved an exchange (to varying degrees):

“We exchange best practices, we exchange technical information and knowledge... to my mind, that is mutual benefit.” [Int.#52.Gr]

In this way, the School Feeding Programme was seen overall as successful in terms of benefitting all nations involved, and providing a platform for all to contribute their own knowledge to the programme: “As we learn from others we too can share and teach others” (Int.#47.Gr). As discussed in Chapter 6, the meetings and training in Brazil often led to participants sharing their own experiences that Brazil and countries present could learn from, such as St Lucia sharing its knowledge of private sector investment; further, at the time of research St Lucia was assisting the OECS in spreading the programme through the Eastern Caribbean based on their model (Int.#36.SL).

In some circumstances, the mutual benefit was more tangible and transactional, as in the case of Guyana counter-trading with Venezuela in rice for oil or Grenada trading in spices; however, these were small and confined to only a few cases (Int.#39.SL-Ven). Another benefit suggested was that of commercial gain to Southern donors, as providing assistance also provided them with a entry point into the local market. This was mentioned in regards to Brazil and their desire to do

business in the Caribbean (Int.#37.Gr) – commercial interests were a part of Brazilian foreign policy at this time, as discussed in Chapter 4, and as such it was a goal that appeared to be successful in the Caribbean. This was also noted as a benefit to Venezuela and how PetroCaribe had given them a “guaranteed market” in the region (Int.#48.Gr) – in contrast to Brazil, however, the Venezuelans were not as open about this in their SSC policies.

While the benefits listed above were noted as important forms of mutual exchange, the most common benefit cited for Brazil and Venezuela in providing assistance was that of gaining international support. As mentioned above, the idea of showing support was a strong indicator of solidarity and thereby international support can be seen as straddling these two principles. The provision of international support was also regarded as the most useful and valuable thing that St Lucia and Grenada could give, due largely to the membership of these two islands in regional organisations that held significant sway in international fora:

“The support of those small countries at international forums, like the UN and international organisations where voting is important, and so despite the size of the countries, each country has a vote, and so yes, that is important. For example, at the OAS, the CARICOM countries have a significant block of votes. So it is of some value in that way.” [Int.#41.SL]

As such, when asked what Grenada had to give in return for assistance received, one interviewee stated:

“We are able to support each other in the international community, we support candidatures in international bodies.” [Int.#52.Gr]

This issue of international support was of particular interest to Brazil and Venezuela during this time, as discussed in Chapter 2, and so how these two countries harnessed this support as mutual benefit of their SSC activities warrants further consideration.

Benefitting Brazil – Support for its international ambitions

As discussed in Chapter 2, Brazil was upfront as to its reasons to become more involved throughout the Global South. To become a bigger player on the world stage would require allies, especially from its own region, and SSC was a means to do this. In regards to the Caribbean region more specifically, a Brazilian representative in St Lucia described how Brazil benefitted from SSC:

“What they have to give is... ‘diplomatic support’. For instance, those countries, all together they reach a certain number in the international organisations where their votes, when it’s taken as a bloc, is important. So the Eastern Caribbean countries... it’s six votes. They are part of CARICOM. And CARICOM are 13 votes... And in a broader conception, they’re part of what they call the SIDS... right now the SIDS, they hold about 20% of the votes, of the seats at the United Nations. So what they have to give you is diplomatic support, that’s a South-South cooperation from their point of view.” [Int.#35.SL-Br]

While Brazil was known to have global aspirations that required allies and support, they were seen as different to Northern donors that were viewed as perhaps wanting to dominate Southern countries; further, it was stated that Brazil would never demand allegiance or bring repercussions, such as withdrawing their assistance, if support wasn’t shown (Int.#41.SL). Hence, while interviewees within St Lucia and Grenada were cognisant of Brazil’s interests in engaging in SSC to boost its own influence, due to the successful cooperation experienced via the School Feeding Programme as well as Brazil’s expanded presence in the region via its embassies, so far they were happy to comply, in the hope the exchange of international support would go both ways:

“We cooperate on issues of mutual concern in the international community ... When Grenada has a candidate we lobby our allies, when they have candidates we support each other in international fora.” [Int.#52.Gr]

That the region’s support proved valuable to Brazil could be seen in the successful election of Brazil’s Roberto Azevêdo as Director General of the WTO in 2013 – a win that was especially significant as it was against another Latin American candidate, Mexico’s Herminio Blanco, who was known to be the US and UK’s choice (Bourcier 2013). Likewise, Brazil’s Graziano da Silva was elected Director General of the FAO in 2011 and then again by an overwhelming majority in 2015 – a win largely attributed to his successful implementation of the School Feeding Programme (FAO 2015c). Hence, while individual votes are not recorded, it seemed likely that many of the Caribbean countries had supported Brazil in order to bring about these wins.

As such, it seemed overall Brazil was successful in gaining the benefits it sought when engaging in SSC, which St Lucia and Grenada were willing to give in acknowledgement of Brazil’s attempts to expand its presence in the region and provide value through its programmes.

Benefitting Venezuela – Protection and influence

For Venezuela, mutual benefit was a more problematic principle than for Brazil. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, Venezuela based much of its SSC on the premise of solidarity and a “genuine desire” to help nations – a belief reiterated by a Venezuelan official in St Lucia when interviewed (Int.#39.SL-Ven). As such, Venezuela rarely spoke about its own gains as part of the cooperation. One interviewee stated this was an “idealistic approach” adopted under President Chávez, as previously Venezuela’s activities in the Caribbean were more obviously linked to Venezuela’s interests in the region (Int.#43.Car). That Venezuela was motivated by genuine concern during this period was a commonly held view amongst interviewees; however, this was usually followed with the disclaimer that there is always more to the story, and Venezuela is no different in this regard:

“I think the intentions were honourable. Of course there might be the geopolitics and everybody has been involved, whether it’s the US or Venezuela, but Venezuela has really been providing assistance under PetroCaribe.” [Int.#44.SL]

“I think it maximises their influence in the Americas because if they’ve got Central America and Caribbean countries that are beholden in one or another way economically, whether it’s PetroCaribe or whether it’s some other form of arrangement, it means that Venezuela can go into other institutions or it sometimes is with the United States and say you know we have weight... and I think another thing which is very easy to overlook with Venezuela like the Cubans is that they are socially committed... it’s a genuine characteristic.” [Int.#42.Car]

Hence there appeared to be no naivety on the part of recipients and most understood that Venezuela required support and would seek it when necessary – whether this was overtly stated or not. However, as discussed in Chapter 7, most interviewees were insistent that Venezuela had never placed pressure on St Lucia or Grenada to support its positions – for example, in regards to Venezuela’s Caribbean territorial claims, St Lucia and Grenada were firm on supporting CARICOM decisions (Int.#50.SL; Int.#43.Car; Int.#45.SL; Int.#42.Car).

Overall it seemed Venezuela was successful in gaining goodwill and support through SSC: “The goodwill is there. Many countries in South America are very grateful, they are very happy with it, many people have benefitted from what they do” (Int.#48.Gr). And while it was recognised that Venezuelan SSC was likely to diminish due to its domestic concerns, it was stated that Venezuela’s contributions would not quickly be forgotten, especially considering its long history in the region and its generous offerings over the period 2005–2016 (Int.#33.Gr).

Mutual benefit good for SSC and its participants

Mutual benefit was perceived as a point of differentiation between SSC and Northern-led cooperation. Where countries of the South may have previously felt they had nothing to offer, by engaging in mutual exchange through SSC this had an empowering effect on small states such as St Lucia and Grenada. Further, it indicated a possible change in how the South perceived itself and participated in international affairs. While mutual benefit was rarely explicitly defined within a cooperation agreement, the nature of SSC as commonly involving knowledge sharing and technical cooperation allowed the exchange to occur naturally through dialogue and experience. However, in cases where the SSC project was financial, as was the case for much of Venezuela's assistance in St Lucia and Grenada, it was a challenge to ensure mutual benefits were included where recipient states lacked the resources to reciprocate. However, as this was a hallmark of SSC, to ignore this principle could result in the cooperation resembling unequal relations that were more closely associated with Northern-led cooperation. In regards to the Caribbean this risk was reduced as international support was cited as something these small states always had the ability to provide and was always appreciated. As such, it seemed both Brazil and Venezuela had been able to procure the benefit of international support from St Lucia and Grenada in exchange for their SSC programmes. However, while Brazil was upfront about desiring this support, Venezuela appeared uncomfortable with this principle as it preferred to focus on solidarity as a motivating factor. Nonetheless, it seemed these two small islands were willing to give this support in order to balance the scales.

SSC in principle and in practice

The SSC principles of solidarity, partnership, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit appeared to resonate with interviewees, both in regards to SSC generally and in the cases of Venezuela and Brazil. As indicated by the interviewees, each of the SSC principles legitimised the presence of the others, and formed a positive feedback loop when the SSC norm regime functioned as it should, as shown in Figure 8.1. Hence, the relational principles of solidarity and partnership should be demonstrated in respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit, and vice versa. While connected, each principle was also viewed as important to SSC in its own right. Solidarity was seen as the foundational principle, based on commonality of history and challenges within the South. Partnership ensured parties were treated with respect and as equals, even where there were large disparities between the two

countries. Respect for sovereignty was central to SSC, as it prevented unwanted intervention through conditional assistance and allowed space for flexibility in programmes. Finally, mutual benefit was viewed as a distinguishing factor of SSC, emphasising the cooperative element of the exchange and empowering smaller states by recognising they have something offer.

The case of Brazil's involvement in the School Feeding Programme appeared to be a positive example of the SSC norm regime functioning as it should with all principles apparent: solidarity was shown by the programme's focus on working with the poorer sectors of society; partnership was present in the many meetings and discussions, whereby participants felt they were treated with respect; Brazil's respect for sovereignty was reflected in its lack of conditions and the flexibility for local adaptation of the programme; and mutual benefit could be detected both in the knowledge sharing between all parties and in St Lucia and Grenada's willingness to provide international support in return. Due to the success of this programme, its increased embassy presence during this period and its focus on technical cooperation, Brazil was generally perceived as demonstrating all the SSC principles. However, concerns were raised that Brazil had made more promises than it could keep and as a result solidarity could break down over time. At the time of research, however, interviewees were positive about Brazil and hopeful its partnership would continue.

Venezuela's programmes through PetroCaribe and ALBA were also generally seen as positive, though challenges were noted. Solidarity was apparent in Venezuela's generosity, particularly in its grants. Partnership was demonstrated by the high amount of dialogue in ALBA and PetroCaribe. Respect for sovereignty was shown by how Venezuela had not made demands of their partners and also in the bilateral nature of the ALBA and PetroCaribe agreements, although concerns were raised that a relationship of dependency was forming and that growing debt could be problematic in the long term. Mutual benefit also raised some flags, as it was noted that ultimately relations within these two organisations were unequal without enough mutual exchange built in. Despite these challenges that indicated the problematic nature of some of the principles, due to Venezuela's positive history in the region and the goodwill generated from its generous programmes, interviewees appeared willing to overlook these flaws and still view Venezuela as a leader in SSC.

As such, it seemed the SSC principles were vitally important, even where they were lacking in practice. Interviewees tended to have strong notions of what the

principles entailed and the corresponding expectations of how states were meant to behave in an SSC exchange. By using this rhetoric, Southern donors could highlight their intention to distinguish themselves from the perceived flaws of Northern donors, and thereby create a base level of goodwill among partner states. This may explain why, even when examples could be given of the principles not being followed, interviewees from St Lucia and Grenada were willing to give Brazil and Venezuela the benefit of the doubt. Hence, at the time of research, it seemed Brazil and Venezuela were reasonably successful in demonstrating the value of the SSC norm regime to the potential norm followers of St Lucia and Grenada through their respective SSC programmes on the ground.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AS A RESONATING NORM REGIME IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

This thesis began with the assertion that South-South cooperation could be examined as a coherent norm regime that could be tracked according to Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) international norm life cycle. It posited that the regime had progressed through the norm origin stage to reach a tipping point in approximately 2009, and was now in the norm cascade stage – although how far it had progressed along this stage was unclear. The focus of this research was therefore on how Southern stakeholders had responded to the SSC norm regime and whether they had found it persuasive enough to support and follow. Hence this research makes a valuable contribution to the growing literature on SSC by showing how it can be viewed as an alternative norm regime existing alongside Northern-led cooperation. It also adds to the limited literature on Southern perspectives of SSC and, using a constructivist approach, explains how it held substantive meaning outside of project impact. This information should be of particular interest to policy-makers who are looking to maintain and improve their SSC programmes in response to recipient perceptions. Brazil and Venezuela were identified as SSC norm leaders and St Lucia and Grenada were examined as recipient states. The central questions were therefore posed of how Brazil and Venezuela had presented and demonstrated the SSC norm regime to the LAC region during the period 2005–2016 and thereby established themselves as SSC norm leaders, and how potential norm followers had responded to these actions.

To measure the rhetorical persuasiveness of the norm regime, the origins of SSC were first examined. It was then shown how SSC had progressed from a collection of noble ideas to a coherent norm regime that by the mid-2000s was backed up with action by a number of Southern donors. The particular trajectory of Brazil and Venezuela as two such donors was provided, and it was shown how these two states emerged as the significant SSC norm leaders within the LAC region during this period, albeit with different approaches and emphases. Using semi-structured interviews with international observers who had knowledge of SSC but little firsthand experience on the ground, Chapter 4 discussed the impact of SSC rhetoric on the perceptions of a sample of Southern (and some Northern) stakeholders. It was found that the rhetoric had been somewhat effective and that, generally, the

SSC norm regime seemed to resonate with stakeholders as a distinct, positive and cohesive form of international cooperation that had potential to expand further.

To measure the impact of demonstration of the SSC norm regime, Brazil and Venezuela's relations with the Eastern Caribbean were examined, with St Lucia and Grenada acting as detailed case studies where fieldwork was conducted. The SSC projects that took place during this period were identified, and using semi-structured interviews with stakeholders the way in which these projects were perceived was examined. Overall, it was found that stakeholders within St Lucia and Grenada showed a positive response to both Brazil and Venezuela's SSC activities and felt they demonstrated the SSC principles, albeit with some caveats and concerns, as discussed below.

This chapter draws some general conclusions from the research, by first providing more detailed answers to the two research questions and exploring how SSC became a meaningful and resonating norm regime within the South. Secondly, it examines the strength of the SSC norm regime against the successful norm criteria as listed in Chapter 1, and discusses the implications of these findings. The limitations of the research are identified and suggestions are made for further research in this field. Finally, it discusses the contribution of this research to both norm change theory and to policy-makers.

Presenting and demonstrating SSC: Two norm leaders emerge in Latin America and the Caribbean

By the end of the 20th century, South-South cooperation had a strong rhetorical tradition built on a post-colonial quest for independence as demonstrated at Bandung in 1955, and a desire to work together to resist being drawn into the Cold War as shown at Buenos Aires in 1978. As such, by the time the emerging powers began to engage in Southern cooperation activities to a new and unprecedented level in the mid-2000s, SSC was already an established development model that could be drawn on and promoted by Southern donors as a guide for activity as well as a force for global change. Based on this increased level of practice, in 2009, with the *Nairobi Resolution* (UN General Assembly 2010), SSC was fashioned into a coherent norm regime made up of four essential principles – solidarity, partnership, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. The SSC norm regime was in many ways a response to perceived flaws in Northern-led cooperation, and especially the actions of the OECD DAC donors and the Bretton Woods institutions. As such, the

following differences were apparent in the rhetoric: SSC was based on solidarity, Northern-led cooperation was based on charity; SSC emphasised commonality and partnership, Northern-led cooperation reinforced division; SSC believed in all countries having value and something to offer, Northern-led cooperation denied Southern agency; SSC was built on a respect for sovereignty and a principle of non-intervention, which Northern-led cooperation had infringed in the past. However, it was repeated that SSC was not a replacement of Northern-led cooperation but rather a complementary offering.

As mentioned, this increase in SSC rhetoric was primarily due to the increase in SSC action during the 2000s, which resulted from structural changes occurring in both the North and the South. During the 1990s many Southern nations, such as St Lucia and Grenada, were graduated to middle-income status and were therefore ineligible for grant-based ODA moving forward; however, they still faced significant development challenges that required external assistance. Northern assistance became more volatile due to shifting priorities, such as the war in the Middle East and managing the financial fall-out from the GFC in 2008. Also at this time, emerging powers in the South, particularly the BRICS, were starting to look outward and had the resources to step in where the North had stepped back. As such, as the South looked for new sources of support, Southern donors were looking for new areas of influence. This process was particularly apparent in the LAC region – the US's gaze had shifted from the region, a number of leftist governments with a social agenda took power, and regionalist projects gained momentum. The region was therefore in an amenable position for SSC to take root.

Two countries in particular – Brazil and Venezuela – emerged as the states with the correct conditions to embrace SSC and become leaders in this field. During the early 2000s, both had charismatic Presidents with a clear vision of foreign policy and a belief in the potential of Southern cooperation to shape global relations in its favour. Brazil built its SSC programmes on its domestic strengths and successes, its newfound emerging status alongside the BRICS and its ability to demonstrate soft power through diplomatic expansion and dialogue. Venezuela, on the other hand, was led by the ideological underpinnings of a radical leftist agenda that sought expansion and protection through generous loan and grant schemes as well as extensive social programmes, funded by significant oil wealth derived from high global oil prices.

As such, by the mid-2000s, a convergence of events in both the North and South saw SSC make the leap from established but largely rhetorical ideas to a coherent norm regime promoted and backed up with action by a collection of Southern donors. At the same time, the LAC region also experienced its own set of events that saw the emergence of two SSC norm leaders with the drive, resources and conviction to present and demonstrate the regime to potential norm followers.

Brazilian SSC – Building prestige through sustainable cooperation

Brazil's SSC programmes to the LAC region and especially to the Eastern Caribbean focused on an expanded diplomatic presence and technical cooperation, emphasising partnership and positioning itself as a voice of the South. Both international observers and Caribbean stakeholders recognised Brazil's potential to play a larger role in global affairs as a promoter of Southern interests, and recognised the value in fostering relations with Brazil so the benefits could be shared should the time come – as such, it seemed Brazil was successful in gaining the support of its partners via its SSC activities.

The School Feeding Programme became the main project within the Eastern Caribbean and demonstrated the essential components of Brazil's approach and interpretation of the SSC norm regime. The Programme was based on Brazil's successful implementation of a similar programme within Brazil, utilising its skills in agriculture, health and education. Stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada noted the credibility this gave Brazil, and that Brazil's success showed it was possible to achieve similar outcomes in their own contexts. The Programme included a number of meetings, visits and conferences that fostered dialogue and built relations amongst the parties, which were positively received and appreciated by partners. It was a demand-driven project – states requested to participate – and was conducted directly through the relevant ministries with some oversight by the Itamaraty and ABC, a sometimes complicated but generally successful approach. The Programme was adaptable to local conditions, and allowed for knowledge transfer, as shown by St Lucia passing its small-island experiences to Grenada. Finally, the Programme demonstrated Brazil's preference for working with international organisations, as shown in its cooperation with the FAO as funder and manager of the Programme. That the FAO was directed by a Brazilian during this time is significant, as is the fact that current Brazilian law did not allow for the hiring of foreign workers or purchasing products overseas. As such, Brazil's use of international institutions was a practical necessity as well as a means to spread

Brazil's successes and increase its influence. Due to this structure of cooperation, the School Feeding Programme was recognised as an example of best SSC practice by the UNOSSC, and was viewed positively by participants as a sustainable and replicable project.

While overall Brazilian SSC was well received from afar and on the ground, concerns were also raised. The notion of Brazil over-promising and under-delivering on its relations was mentioned by a number of interviewees (both international observers and Caribbean stakeholders), leading to disappointment and frustration. This was seen as damaging to Brazil's reputation and reflective of the political changes occurring during this period – namely the departure of Lula, who was viewed as a significant driver of Brazil's expansive foreign policy and specifically the push to the South. Further, there was concern that as Brazil grew in power it might lose its interest in Southern ideals such as SSC. This was raised more by international observers, with stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada seemingly more convinced of Brazil's conviction in its Southern identity. Despite these concerns, Brazil was perceived as a norm leader in the field, supporting and adhering to the SSC principles and demonstrating the benefits through its programmes. However, this status was reliant on the successful continuation of these programmes as the goodwill gained would likely fade before long.

Venezuelan SSC – Expressing leftist ideology through generous offerings

Venezuela's SSC programmes during this period were founded heavily on the radical leftist politics of Hugo Chávez built on the vast oil wealth the country enjoyed at this time. It appealed to the older ideas of solidarity and a quest for Southern sovereignty and autonomy, and had a grand vision of LAC integration and global change. This was largely expressed through the development of two regional organisations – ALBA and PetroCaribe – that provided access to grant and loan agreements, as well as to an array of social programmes. Venezuela found many of its allies in the Caribbean region, an area in which it had a long history of both presence and cooperation. However, Chávez's radical agenda and combative rhetoric led to political division within partner states, with countries such as St Lucia and Grenada showing a reticence to join Venezuela's groups lest they be tainted by the association. Despite this, by 2014 all of the Eastern Caribbean states were members of both PetroCaribe and ALBA in the pragmatic belief that there were benefits to be had; although, stakeholders made clear that they had not signed on

to the political aspects of the groups and should conflicts arise they would remain loyal to Caribbean alliances above all others. Hence, while not naïve to the idiosyncrasies of Venezuelan SSC, LAC observers and stakeholders were generally positive about the programmes and were openly grateful for the generosity Venezuela had shown to the region.

While the social programmes offered through ALBA and PetroCaribe were substantial, the financial assistance provided by Venezuela was its most significant form of SSC in the Eastern Caribbean during this period. The financing grants as part of the PetroCaribe deals and the ALBA and bilateral grants for infrastructure, budgetary assistance and other projects were large and extensive, and were described by many as keeping these islands functioning when oil prices were high and other sources of assistance were difficult to find. Concerns of economic mismanagement and political turmoil within Venezuela after Chávez's death in 2013 were flagged, but while there was some indication that oil shipments had decreased and benefits from financing and grants were declining, both ALBA and PetroCaribe were still functioning in 2016. More poignant concerns were those of debt and dependency of the beneficiaries on Venezuela – however, interviewees, while noting potential dangers, were generally adamant that these were aspects that had to be managed by the recipients. As such, while the future of the programmes was somewhat in doubt, Caribbean stakeholders were willing to overlook potential and current problems and instead focus on the tremendous benefits that Venezuelan SSC had afforded them over this period. Further, even critics noted the game-changing aspects of Venezuela's unique brand of cooperation. As such, over this time Venezuela established itself as a SSC norm leader, although its followers were more likely to adopt a less radical brand of SSC.

Two complementary visions of SSC within the LAC region

Brazil and Venezuela emerged as the two SSC norm leaders within the LAC region during the period 2005–2016. Both had achieved a level of economic development to look beyond their borders, were supporters of the SSC norm regime and had a distinct vision of how SSC could impact on global relations, and both were seeking support and influence within the region. While this may have resulted in competitive offerings, instead they provided complementary approaches to SSC that were beneficial and appreciated by partner countries such as St Lucia and Grenada. Brazil's focus on technical cooperation, based on its proven skills, experiences and successes delivered with the assistance of multilateral organisations such as the

FAO were viewed as sustainable and flexible projects that could be tailored to specific contexts. In contrast, Venezuela's focus on large financial grants, infrastructure projects and energy assistance provided much-needed support for the cash-strapped islands of the Caribbean. Both types of assistance were helpful in addressing the complex development problems faced by states such as St Lucia and Grenada, and even provided opportunities for overlap – for example, the School Feeding Programme in Grenada was partly funded through the PetroCaribe social grants, while technical assistance to expand the programme was provided by Brazil.

Due to the distinctiveness of each approach, partner countries were never placed in a position where they had to choose one or the other. That said, Brazilian assistance was seen as more sustainable in the long term as it was based on knowledge transfer that would outlive the cooperation, as well as funding through multilaterals that were less at the whim of political change. Venezuelan SSC, however, was reliant on the continuation of beneficial oil deals and the availability of Venezuelan grants or Venezuelan-funded projects – which were inextricably connected to the economic and political conditions within Venezuela that looked increasingly unstable during the course of this research. Further, while Brazilian SSC may have been viewed as pragmatic and strategic, Venezuela's heavy emphasis on leftist ideology and anti-imperial messaging made partners wary of becoming too embedded in Venezuelan ambitions. As such, as representatives of the SSC norm regime, Brazil's message was more likely to gain followers even though its offerings were smaller and more tempered; Venezuela, on the other hand, had a number of eager participants but few who would describe themselves as followers of their combative brand of SSC. This also stemmed from the countries' positions on international cooperation more generally – Brazil advocated the standard SSC approach of it being an alternative but not a replacement of Northern-led cooperation, while Venezuela left little space for any type of cooperation that didn't adhere to the SSC principles. As such, most norm followers, at this stage at least, would be wise to leave their options open rather than closing themselves off to much-needed assistance – especially if the future of SSC looks in doubt.

The examples of Brazil and Venezuela as analysed in this study reveal the heterogeneity of approaches of SSC donors that can co-exist under the SSC framework – the broad (and rather loose) essentials being that they adhere to the SSC principles and, most importantly, identify as “Southern” nations. This variety of

programmes was beneficial for the partner states – Brazil’s technical assistance and Venezuela’s large financial transfers were both needed and valued by St Lucia and Grenada and were also complementary to each other. This also shows how SSC is built on using a country’s particular strengths for effective cooperation – Venezuela had access to funds, Brazil had strong technical expertise in various areas (but limited funding) – it was logical that they would therefore offer assistance in the way they did during this time, it was an efficient use of available resources. On this basis, any country can cooperate and participate in mutual exchange by identifying these strengths – for example, St Lucia had small-island experience it could pass on to other Eastern Caribbean nations to strengthen the cooperation within the Brazilian-led school feeding programme. The broad definition of SSC also allows for a wide range of cooperation programs that leaves space for many countries to participate; this is in contrast with the more rigid definitions and rules of the DAC.

While Brazil and Venezuela differed in approach, their underlying motivations remained somewhat similar to each other and to Northern donors – that is, both sought influence in the Caribbean region, including St Lucia and Grenada, which held value as a strategic space. The Caribbean is situated in an important geographic area – a bridge between Central and South America, as well as Latin America and the US. Also, as Northern interest dwindled in the region, due to the loosening of colonial links with the UK and Europe and the US’s shift in focus, space was left for new powers to enter. That the area is made up of many tiny yet independent nations also has significant advantages for donors – programmes are inevitably small (and less expensive), and when added together these islands make up a large percentage of votes in regional and international organisations. As such, for countries such as Venezuela and Brazil that might be seeking a greater role in world affairs (Brazil) or protection on the global stage (Venezuela), a relatively small investment can result in significant pay-offs. Hence the relevance of St Lucia and Grenada as analysed in this study is to show how smaller, middle-income countries still in need of financial and developmental assistance can be spaces of strategic value to Southern donors that may be just as important as larger, seemingly more significant partnerships, especially as the cost of cooperation is likely to be lower.

Overall, both Brazil and Venezuela were viewed positively by international observers (i.e. LAC diplomats) and Caribbean stakeholders on the ground, and seen as promoting and adhering to the SSC norm regime they claimed to represent.

Responding to the SSC norm regime: Promise and potential

The focus of the study was on how recipients perceived and responded to the SSC norm regime as represented by Brazil and Venezuela. The measurement for success of the norm regime was therefore based on whether the South was supporting and adopting this message, as shown in the interviews that serve as the central data of this research. While there is some evidence of SSC terms infiltrating Northern-led development discourse, as discussed briefly in Chapter 3, Southern proponents of SSC have continued to insist that SSC is a separate but complementary form of development assistance and recipients have seemingly perceived it in this way – that is, there was no confusion amongst the interviewees as to what SSC was or what countries were involved. While the interviewees were positive and tended to be enthusiastic about the SSC principles, and implied that universal uptake would be appreciated, it was not expected at this stage. As such, the success of the norm regime in this research was centred on Southern responses and uptake, not the expansion of the regime throughout all development relations; the discussion that follows therefore examines these results. Further research on how SSC discourse has influenced Northern-led cooperation discourse would be of value, however.

The SSC norm regime was posited to be made up of four principles that together formed a coherent set of guidelines for Southern donors to follow. As shown above, the norm regime left space for interpretation and varying approaches, as well as for emphasis on certain areas above others. As such, Brazil strongly emphasised partnership in its SSC policies and rhetoric, along with sovereignty; Venezuela, on the other hand, focused on solidarity and sovereignty. However, a recurrent theme within the interviews was the self-reinforcing nature of the principles, which were interconnected within a SSC feedback loop (see Figure 8.1) – that is, all were necessary to prove both the presence of the other principles and for the activity to be considered SSC. The two relational principles of solidarity and partnership established the expected manner of interactions, and the two practical principles of respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit described how the cooperation should be conducted. However, both the relational and practical principles included aspects of “feeling” and “behaviour”, as demonstrated by the presence of other principles. For example, while partnership was viewed as resulting in a sense of “feeling equal”, it was demonstrated by including mutual benefit in the cooperation; and hence, without mutual benefit it was harder to feel a sense of equality and partnership. As such, the absence of any of the principles was seen as problematic for the regime as a whole. This was also largely because each principle played a

certain role within the SSC norm regime and were interpreted by international observers and Caribbean stakeholders as having a corresponding importance.

Hence, solidarity was viewed as a foundational principle on which SSC could be built; it was attached strongly to a Southern identity, founded on a sense of commonality of experience and goals that results in the South standing together in global affairs. Hence, as discussed in Chapter 1 (see Finnemore and Sikkink 2001), the Southern identity was shown to be a “type” identity – as in states located in the geographic South or classified as developing – as well as a “role” identity – an expression of expected friendship amongst Southern nations. The term “solidarity” in the Southern context can therefore be viewed as embodying the full understanding and cohesion of these identities. Solidarity was described as expressed through empathy and understanding, and in providing assistance in whatever small way possible. While a largely rhetorical device designed to evoke feeling, it was also strongly connected to behaviour to prove its presence. Venezuela was seen as successful in this, as its programmes were generous, focused on the poor and could be seen by “ordinary” people within partner countries. Brazil, on the other hand, was viewed as having a more pragmatic solidarity, and in danger of damaging this if it proved to be empty rhetoric shown in broken promises. Overall, while a rhetorical and elusive concept, solidarity was shown to have genuine meaning for the Southern interviewees.

Partnership within SSC was described as a show of mutual respect and fostering a sense of equality, even when the power imbalances were objectively quite large. While important to all interviewees, those in St Lucia and Grenada placed particular emphasis on the principle as a significant difference between SSC and Northern-led cooperation, in which they felt this had been lacking. It was described as expressed through dialogue, flexibility and mutual exchange, but more generally via respectful and equal treatment. Brazil was viewed as particularly successful in this, especially as it had to overcome imbalances of size and wealth. Venezuela, on the other hand, despite its larger size and wealth than many partners in the LAC region (and especially in the Eastern Caribbean) was seen as a long-time friend and so needing to work at achieving a sense of partnership was less of an issue as it could be assumed. It seemed that if either country lost its focus on respect and partnership, however, its claims to SSC would be problematic and would perhaps demonstrate they had begun to perceive themselves as more Northern than Southern.

Respect for sovereignty was generally viewed as an essential component of SSC and was emphasised by both international observers and Caribbean stakeholders. As with partnership, it was described in contrast to Northern-led cooperation that was perceived as having infringed sovereignty in the past. It had strong relational and practical aspects – by offering unconditional assistance and not interfering in domestic affairs a sense of respect and trust was demonstrated. SSC was also viewed as playing a role in increasing Southern sovereignty overall by offering more choices in the development assistance arena and allowing the South to develop through such cooperation. Brazil was described as particularly strong on this principle, both historically and in its recent SSC projects – it was acknowledged, though, that this was helped by the type of SSC Brazil offered (ie mostly technical cooperation), which left little space for intervention. Venezuela found mixed opinions – many praised its lack of conditions in its generous financial assistance and were adamant Venezuela had never overstepped its bounds (a view mostly held by stakeholders in St Lucia and Grenada), while others pointed out the significant issues of long-term debt and dependency that indicated a loss of sovereignty on the part of the recipients (a more common international observer view). The most significant concern, however, was that as countries grew in power they might become more Northern in nature and start to make demands; however, as with partnership, it was viewed that to lose respect for sovereignty would void claims to SSC.

Mutual benefit was viewed by most interviewees in all groups as the primary definer of SSC and its strongest point of difference to Northern-led cooperation. It was described as leading to a sense of pride and empowerment in the South, as all countries were perceived to have something valuable to offer. It was often expressed through mutual learning, whether directly to the partner or indirectly by passing on knowledge to third parties. While often not overtly written into a cooperation agreement, an implied notion of international support when needed was described as present – an exchange that even the smallest and least-resourced states were able to provide. As such, both Brazil and Venezuela appeared to be successful in gaining this type of support from its partners, and particularly those in St Lucia and Grenada. However, this was shown to have limits, and in the case of Venezuela, while states would not go against them in international fora, they might not offer their vocal support. Hence the principle of mutual benefit can be closely connected to the role of SSC in increasing the soft power of Southern donors, and in the case of Brazil and Venezuela this was shown to be an effective means of

increasing their soft power by gaining allies, support and praise. However, the principle of mutual benefit also proved more problematic than the others – while it was viewed as necessary for SSC, it was also the most likely to be lacking due to its implied but rarely defined inclusion, a frequent lack of resources on the part of the partner country, and the limited nature of international support.

This leads to an interesting conundrum of the SSC norm regime – while the principles were all viewed as necessary to make up and prove the presence of the norm regime, there were examples of infringements that tended to be quickly forgiven or ignored in practice. This was particularly the case in regards to Venezuela, which was generally viewed as a champion of SSC while they had significant problems with the principle of mutual benefit, both in rhetoric (Venezuela emphasised solidarity as a driving force and tended to deny any self-interested gains) and in practice (comments were made about ALBA and PetroCaribe not having enough mutual benefit built in to the groups that were entirely dependent on Venezuela for their survival). Further, that the small islands of the Caribbean were largely dependent on continued Venezuelan support, and had significant levels of long-term debt with Venezuela, was a considerable threat to their sovereignty even if it was believed that Venezuela would not take advantage of this. And even further, Venezuela's condition that financing funds be spent on social programmes is one of the closest examples of a governance condition reminiscent of highly contested and disliked Northern donor demands. However, despite these inconsistencies, stakeholders within St Lucia and Grenada seemed willing to give Venezuela the benefit of the doubt and ignore or explain away the principles that were problematic while they simultaneously stated that all the principles were necessary for SSC.

This may be explained by the longevity of positive relations with Venezuela – that is, enough goodwill had been built up over time to excuse any potential problems. This was reaffirmed by the alternate experience of Brazil. While Brazil was viewed very positively in having presented and demonstrated the SSC principles in their programmes on the ground, there were issues raised of Brazil over-promising and under-delivering that could over time break down solidarity, as well as skepticism that they would betray their Southern roots should they grow too powerful. Many were convinced that Brazil was genuine in its role as a SSC norm leader, but it was a recurring comment that they needed to be careful in maintaining this position. That Brazil had always had a level of separation from the LAC region due to its differing language and culture, and that it was a relatively new player within the Caribbean during the period of study, highlights the fact that Brazil has less history

and goodwill to fall back on when circumstances become more difficult. Further, it was noted that empty rhetoric can be more damaging than no rhetoric at all – as such, if Brazil continues to promote its position as a SSC norm leader but doesn't back this up with programmes that demonstrate the SSC principles, any goodwill could quickly turn to bad.

This shows how SSC during these early stages of action since the mid-2000s is in a delicate position – its long rhetorical tradition has created a firm set of benchmarks and guidelines that together make up the SSC norm regime that appears to hold resonance and meaning within the Global South. As such, it is relatively clear to Southern partners what is expected of Southern donors now they have the resources to put this norm regime into greater action than ever before. While the rhetoric can foster goodwill and provide the protection of being given the benefit of the doubt – which may last longer for those countries that also have historical goodwill – this time is limited as ultimately the rhetoric will be judged against behaviour and continued infringements of the principles might lead to a loss of goodwill that will likely prove difficult to regain. As such, with the establishment of a coherent SSC norm regime by 2009 and the increase (and subsequent decline in regards to Brazil and Venezuela) in activity since then, SSC has become an established and supported form of international cooperation that is no longer a set of ideals but a set of expectations and benchmarks that have raised the stakes for all using that term.

Another significant finding of this research is how Southern stakeholders were generally supportive of the SSC norm regime not only for its practical benefits but for its symbolic (and hence somewhat rhetorical) role in altering perceptions within the South. It was mentioned frequently the empowering effect of taking part in SSC, primarily due to its emphasis on mutual benefit and the sense of self-worth it created, but also due to the sense of equality and solidarity it fostered that showed how the South could work together for common gain. As such, this was closely connected to the goal of SSC leading to greater changes in the global order – as stated in SSC rhetoric since its origins at Bandung, as well as in recent Brazilian and Venezuelan policy during 2005–2016. SSC provided an alternative to Northern-led cooperation that gave the South more options and potentially the power to refuse assistance they viewed as unsuitable. Further, Southern cooperation could result in stronger challenges to the global status quo and lead to benefits for all the South. To do this, however, it is important for SSC to remain distinct and founded on a Southern solidarity that remains even as some Southern states become more

powerful. This has already led to challenges, such as how to include proper M&E to prevent waste and abuse without adopting cumbersome reporting requirements, and how to continue encouraging adherence to the SSC norm regime while leaving space for varying approaches and flexibility. That is, how can SSC forge its own path without veering onto the well-trodden trail of Northern-led cooperation?

In light of this, it is also important to acknowledge the many motivations of Southern partner states such as St Lucia and Grenada. While the interviewees were enthusiastic about the SSC principles and showed a genuine belief in the importance of SSC and were eager to see its continuation, they also had more pragmatic motivations for accepting this assistance. As discussed, like many middle-income countries that lack the resources or size to become fully self-sufficient, interviewees from St Lucia and Grenada were generally clear that it was unlikely they would refuse any assistance offered and were not in a position to be picky. Hence their support of SSC could be seen as strategic – this was a source of assistance they needed and so even when states seemed to overstep their bounds (as was the case with some Venezuelan statements in ALBA/PetroCaribe) or waver on the principles it was highly unlikely ties would be cut or assistance refused. As such, until SSC becomes so large and significant so as to negate the need for Northern-led cooperation, it is doubtful that states such as St Lucia and Grenada would knock back offers of assistance from Northern donors out of principle – and even then it seems unlikely that any offers would be refused. As SSC is a complementary approach to Northern-led cooperation this is not problematic. One of the greatest benefits of SSC therefore has been to set a new standard in development assistance by modeling a norm regime that addresses some of the problems and flaws of older forms of assistance and offering an alternative. What countries decide to do in light of these options is their choice.

Overall, interviewees were positive about SSC, how it had progressed so far and its potential, and all wished it to continue in abidance with the SSC principles that made up the norm regime. As such, it appears there is value in considering the question as to the chances of the SSC norm regime progressing to the norm internalisation stage.

Measuring success and moving forward

In light of the above findings, it is useful to consider the SSC norm regime in regards to the successful norm criteria listed in Chapter 1, and whether it has been

able to display some of the necessary characteristics to ensure its continuation and possible progress into stage three of the norm life cycle. The first criteria was that of framing the new norms within accepted norms, or rather demonstrating why old norms needed to be replaced. SSC managed to include aspects of both approaches. The SSC principles are founded on established norms that are difficult to dispute (eg partnership, working together, allowing all parties to benefit) while also standing in opposition to perceived “bad” norms of Northern-led cooperation that were viewed as needing to be replaced (eg promoting respect for sovereignty over intervention, and equality over division). Both the international observer and Caribbean stakeholder interviewees tended to repeat this rhetoric and describe the indisputable virtue of the principles, as well as frequently providing comparison with Northern-led cooperation that they perceived as negative and needing to change. As such, the SSC norm regime can be considered strong against this criteria. Further, SSC appeals to broad, universal norms that can be adopted in a variety of ways, rather than a rigid set of specific rules, as shown in the particular approaches of Brazil and Venezuela in St Lucia and Grenada – hence it also satisfies this proposed criteria for norm success. One concern about using such broad and established norms is that they can be easily co-opted by other norm regimes, as has been seen over the past 15 years in DAC and UN development assistance rhetoric (discussed in Chapter 3). However, as shown throughout this research, rhetoric isn’t enough – it needs to be backed up with action or else it can be more damaging than not stating it to begin with. Hence, Northern donors should be wary of using these terms if they are not serious about demonstrating them on the ground.

Another criterion for success was that of the norm leaders having access to the resources to promote and extend the norm so as to gain followers. This has undoubtedly been the case in SSC – it was due to the rising Southern powers and their increase in wealth and resources that led to this renewed period of SSC and an increase in its practice. In the case of Brazil, it was its development success, economic improvement and identification as a member of the BRICS, as well as its use of international institutions such as the FAO and its penchant for diplomacy that allowed it to enter into the SSC space as both a rhetorical and a practical leader. Likewise, Venezuela’s increased oil wealth provided the basis for its extensive SSC programmes and allowed it to establish its own SSC-focused organisations in ALBA and PetroCaribe. That this collided with a number of global disruptions, such as 9/11 and the GFC, that opened up space for new players in international

cooperation further enhanced the impact of these resources. One of the most useful resources, however, for both Brazil and Venezuela was the presence of a driven, charismatic and visionary leader who harnessed these resources and made SSC a significant part of foreign policy. As such, Lula and Chávez were strongly connected to Brazil and Venezuela's roles as SSC norm leaders – a fact frequently mentioned by interviewees. This ultimately led to problems, however, as both Brazil and Venezuela struggled to maintain this leadership role when they left office and economic and political conditions shifted. This shows the highly personalised nature of SSC and how it does not seem to have yet become fully embedded into Southern foreign relations and institutions that would allow it to outlive governments and presidents.

A reason for this lack of continuity could be the result of SSC's relative newness in practice; however, it also relates to the findings of Krook and True (2012) that outcome-based norms are more likely to succeed than vague norms. While the SSC norm regime has established itself as coherent and recognisable by potential norm followers in the South, it has not resulted in a measurable set of guidelines embedded in institutional agreements, as in the case of the aid effectiveness agenda of the DAC. While international norms do not need to be codified and many are non-binding, the strongest norms usually include measurable criteria. The *Nairobi Resolution* laid down the principles in their clearest manner but there is no overarching international organisation to manage SSC or impose sanctions for non-compliance (although smaller groups such as IBSA and ALBA, as well as the UNOSSC, show limited examples of this). However, while it may be useful to further codify SSC, there are stated benefits for not doing so. It leaves more space for flexibility and freedom in approach and prevents the process becoming less efficient by adding audits and reporting mechanisms. That said, many interviewees were adamant that some form of M&E was necessary in SSC, and so a balance must be found. This leads back to the challenge of ensuring proper practice while not forcing SSC to become more like Northern-led cooperation. That said, it would appear a compromise needs to be reached if SSC is going to become a fully embedded and internalised stage three norm. How this might be possible is an area of future research that would be valuable for the study and practice of SSC.

As it stands, however, it seems possible that the SSC norm regime, in the LAC region at least, may remain stuck in stage two due largely to the decline in practice since 2013 and the lessening interest and capabilities of Brazil and Venezuela as two SSC norm leaders. Overall, Southern observers and stakeholders interviewed

as part of this research were positive if somewhat wary in regards to SSC's current and future position, and expressed a need and desire for it to continue. It was also generally believed that once begun it would be difficult to stop entirely, especially now it has a strong rhetorical and practical foundation, and hence even if it does diminish it would hopefully rise again.

That said, this research is subject to a number of limitations. The most prominent of which is the small sample size of the study and that, while pointing to trends within SSC overall, it is specific to the LAC context and even more specific to Brazilian and Venezuelan experience in St Lucia and Grenada. The focus on small case study countries, however, is valuable in adding to the literature on SSC that has focused heavily to this point on programmes between larger donors (eg Brazil, China etc) and larger partner states (eg Mozambique, Africa generally). This research therefore shows the impact of SSC on smaller states that are still in need of assistance and are also areas of influence for donors. Further research that compares and contrasts all donors, both Southern and Northern, in the St Lucian and Grenadian context would be useful in highlighting the differences between the models and also recipient responses; research focusing on SSC programmes between smaller Southern states (ie non-BRICS nations) would also be of interest. Nevertheless, this study adds significantly to the limited body of research on the response of Southern stakeholders to SSC rhetoric and demonstration, which together might form a more conclusive picture of the value of SSC. The use of interviews was particularly valuable in providing the Southern perspective on this Southern phenomenon, and should be considered alongside quantitative data on impact and program analysis to broaden the discussion of SSC. A key contribution of this research, however, was to demonstrate how SSC can be identified as a coherent norm regime with resonance in the Global South that can be placed on Finnemore and Sikkink's norm life cycle, which stands separate to but alongside the Northern-led cooperation norm regime. As this research focuses on the LAC context and therefore proves this theory only in this region, further research looking to place other Southern donors (including China) and regional experiences on the norm life cycle would add to and strengthen this theory. Further, while the largely qualitative approach of this research was valuable in drawing attention to the Southern experience of SSC in this particular context, a larger scale survey across multiple Southern countries or regions on the value, benefits and concerns of SSC would assist in understanding the renewed interest in and practice of SSC since the mid-2000s and identify how it may move forwards and overcome some of the challenges noted in this research.

While this research is original in placing SSC on Finnemore and Sikkink's international norm change model, its greatest value lies in assisting policy-makers in shaping and adapting SSC programmes, both current and in the future. This is particularly the case for Southern donor policy-makers, who are seeking to make their SSC programmes as effective and efficient as possible due to limited resources. It highlights the aspects that partner states most appreciate and areas that could be improved. It also shows the importance of proclaiming and enacting the SSC principles both in policy and on the ground. The interviewees in this study were generally clear on the value of the principles and the dangers of disregarding them – that is, that goodwill could be lost and SSC status questioned. This seemed particularly relevant for large countries like Brazil, which, as they grow, might abandon their Southern identity in order to become more Northern, thereby breaking down the sense of Southern solidarity and may reduce the “partnership” connection. For countries like Venezuela, this research shows that sovereignty in all its manifestations must be respected – for example, allegiance to a donor country's ideological statements can't be assumed (as became problematic in ALBA/PetroCaribe). More generally, mutual benefit is an essential SSC principle that should be considered and built-in to every SSC programme, no matter the size or scale of the project. This seemed the most difficult of the principles to identify in SSC programmes and requires more thought on the part of both Southern donors and partners. The section on M&E should also be of significant value to Southern SSC policy-makers as they think through the methods of achieving effective and efficient accountability in their programmes.

This research may also be of value to Northern donor policy-makers as they consider and modify their development cooperation projects with the South. The interviews and conclusions drawn from this study included criticisms of Northern-led cooperation that may be of use to those donor states looking to improve the recipient experience and adapt their programmes accordingly. As this research clearly posits that SSC is a separate and distinct form of development assistance to Northern-led cooperation, it is not expected that Northern nations should now abide by SSC principles and attempt to replicate SSC – particularly as without a Southern identity this would be very difficult. However, the value placed on partnership, the empowering effects of mutual exchange and the significance of respect for sovereignty that interviewees espoused throughout this study might be considered by all donor countries when designing cooperation projects – even if these result in a variety of different outcomes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEWEE REFERENCE LIST

Abbreviated Code	Full Reference
Int.#01.I-Br	João Almino de Souza Filho [Director, Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (ABC)]. Email communication. 30 November 15.
Int.#02.I-Com	Dr Edmund Amann [Reader in Development Economics, Manchester University]. Phone interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 30 September 2015.
Int.#03.I-Dip	Minister Gustavo Bobrik [Minister (Political), Argentine Embassy]. Joint interview with Minister Piñeiro (Audio recording in author's possession). 8 October 2015.
Int.#04.I-Dip	His Excellency Roberto Calzadilla [Bolivian Ambassador to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 11 August 2015.
Int.#05.I-Ind	Jorge Chediek [Director, UN Office for South-South Cooperation]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 20 May 2016.
Int.#06.I-Dip	His Excellency Dr Federico Alberto Cuello Camilo [Dominican Republic Ambassador to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 5 November 2015.
Int.#07.I-Dip	His Excellency Rolando Drago Rodríguez [Chilean Ambassador to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 30 September 2015.
Int.#08.I-Dip	Laura Frampton [Acting High Commissioner of Belize to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 16 October 2015.
Int.#09.I-Dip	His Excellency Diego Gómez Pickering [Mexican Ambassador to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 20 October 2015.
Int.#10.I-Dip	Lesther Antonio Ortega Lemus [Minister Counsellor and Deputy Head of Guatemalan Embassy, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 21 October 2015.
Int.#11.I-Com	Professor Francisco Panizza [Professor in Latin American and Comparative Politics, London School of Economics and Political Science]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 23 July 2015.
Int.#12.I-Com	Professor Tony Payne [Co-Director, Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute]. Phone interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 1 October 2015.

Int.#13.I-Com	Dr Stephanie Pearce [Academic specialising in Venezuela and counter-trade agreements]. Phone interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 17 September 2015.
Int.#14.I-Dip	Minister Alejandro Piñeiro [Minister (Economic/Commercial), Argentine Embassy, London]. Joint interview with Minister Bobrik (Audio recording in author's possession). 8 October 2015.
Int.#15.I-Com	Dr Pía Riggirozzi [Associate Professor in Global Politics, University of Southampton]. Phone interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 1 October 2015.
Int.#16.I-Dip	His Excellency Ivan Romero-Martinez [Honduran Ambassador to the United Kingdom]. Interview. 8 October 2015.
Int.#17.I-Com	Dr Alex Shankland [Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 29 May 2015.
Int.#18.I-Com	Francoise Vanni [Director of Policy and Campaigns, Oxfam Great Britain]. Skype interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 11 December 2015.
Int.#19.I-Dip	His Excellency Joslyn Raphael Whiteman [Grenadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 9 October 2015.
Int.#20.I-Ven	Anon. [Executive, ALBA-TCP]. Email communication. 18 January 2016.
Int.#21.I-Ind	Anon. [Consultant, UN Office for South-South Cooperation]. Skype interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 2 June 2016.
Int.#22.I-Com	Anon. [Prominent journalist on the Latin American desk of a reputable British newspaper]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 17 July 2015.
Int.#23.I-Com	Anon. [Academic specialising in Venezuela and ALBA]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 26 June 2015.
Int.#24.I-Dip	Anon. [High-level official, Costa Rican Embassy, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 6 October 2015.
Int.#25.I-Dip	Anon. [Staffer, Ecuadorian Embassy, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 25 August 2015.
Int.#26.I-Dip	Anon. [High-level official, St Kitts and Nevis High Commission, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 14 October 2015.
Int.#27.I-Dip	Anon. [Staffer, St Lucian High Commission, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 28 October 2015.
Int.#28.I-Br	Anon. [High-level official, Brazilian Embassy, London]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 5 November 2015.

Int.#29.I-Dip	Anon. [High-level official, Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner, London]. Interview. 4 December 2015.
Int.#30.I-Ind	Anon. [UNASUR staffer]. Skype interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 2 February 2016.
Int.#31.I-Dip	Anon. [Staffer, Uruguayan Embassy, London]. Interview. 19 August 2015.
Int.#32.I-Dip	Anon. [Staffer, Colombian Embassy, London]. Interview. 11 August 2015.
Int.#33.Gr	Dr Patrick Antoine [Grenadian Ambassador to OECS, WTO and CARICOM; Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Government of Grenada; Lecturer, University of the West Indies, Barbados]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 14 April 2016.
Int.#34.Gr	Bernadette Cobb [Accountant, PetroCaribe Grenada Ltd]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 5 April 2016.
Int.#35.SL-Br	His Excellency Sergio Elias Couri [Brazilian Ambassador to St Lucia and the OECS]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 24 February 2016.
Int.#36.SL	Sunita Daniel [Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of St Lucia, seconded to OECS to liaise on school feeding programme and cooperation between St Lucia, FAO and Brazil]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 18 March 2016.
Int.#37.Gr	Dr Malachy Dottin [Director of Research and Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Grenada]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 1 April 2016.
Int.38.Gr	Ruel Edwards [CEO, Marketing and National Importing Board, Grenada]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 21 April 2016.
Int.#39.SL-Ven	Her Excellency Lieff Liubliana Escalona Barrueta [Venezuelan Ambassador to St Lucia], Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 3 March 2016.
Int.#40.Car	Dr Kari Grenade [Senior Economist, Caribbean Development Bank]. Email communication. 6 April 2016.
Int.#41.SL	Earl Huntley [Former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of St Lucia; Former St Lucian Ambassador to the UN]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 14 March 2016.
Int.#42.Car	David Jessop [Consultant, The Caribbean Council]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 11 December 2015.
Int.#43.Car	Dr Didacus Jules [Director General, Organisation of East Caribbean States (OECS)]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 17 March 2016.

Int.#44.SL	Dr Robert Lewis [Minister for Education, Human Resource Development and Labour, Government of St Lucia]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 17 March 2016.
Int.#45.SL	Sir Vaughn Lewis [Special Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of St Lucia; Former Prime Minister of St Lucia (1996–97)]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 16 March 2016.
Int.#46.SL	Brian Louisy [Executive Director, St Lucia Chamber of Commerce]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 23 March 2016.
Int.#47.Gr	Rachael Mathurine [School Feeding Officer, Ministry of Education, Government of Grenada]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 8 April 2016.
Int.#48.Gr	Ambrose Obike [Accountant-General, Ministry of Finance, Government of Grenada; Chairman of PetroCaribe Grenada Ltd]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 8 April 2016.
Int.#49.SL	His Excellency Jorge Francisco Soberon Luis [Cuban Ambassador to St Lucia]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 24 March 2016.
Int.#50.SL	His Excellency Hippolyte Eustace Vitalis [Non Resident Ambassador to ALBA and PetroCaribe, Government of St Lucia]. Interview (Audio recording in author's possession). 29 February 2016.
Int.#51.Gr-Br	(Anon. [High-level official, Brazilian Embassy, Government of Grenada], Interview, 13 April 16)
Int.#52.Gr	(Anon. [High-level official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Grenada], Interview, 13 April 16)
Int.#53.Gr	(Anon. [High-level official, Ministry of Health, Government of Grenada], Interview, 18 April 16)
Int.#54.Gr	(Anon. [High-level technical officer, Ministry of Works, Government of Grenada], Interview, 18 April 16)
Int.#55.Gr	(Anon. [High-level official, Ministry for Economic Development, Government of Grenada], Interview, 12 April 16)

Key

Int = Interview I = International SL = St Lucia Gr = Grenada Car = Caribbean

Dip = Diplomat Ind = Industry Br = Brazil Ven = Venezuela Com = Commentator

APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These are examples of some of the questions asked during the semi-structured interviews carried out with international observers and Caribbean partakers. These questions were used as a starting point to discussions and as a guide to keep the interview on track. The interviews were conducted on the assumption that time would be limited to approximately 30 minutes (although many went well beyond this), hence the interview schedule was typically reduced to around 10 questions with room for expansion if time allowed.

Appendix 2A: International observer interview – sample questions

The following list of questions was used as a general template of topics to be raised; however, the questions were adapted with every interviewee to emphasise aspects that were more relevant to their context. For example, diplomats representing countries with stronger links with Venezuela were asked more questions about their experience with ALBA and PetroCaribe; likewise, commentators who were experts in various topics were asked more specifically about their area of expertise. While the opening question was usually the same – ie a very general question about South-South cooperation – the order of the questions after this initial opener varied so as to follow where the discussion naturally led. The second-level questions were used as prompts if the interviewee was unsure how to respond to the first-level question or was less open during the discussion. These questions were designed to be relatively broad with room for interpretation and direction so as to draw out the aspects of SSC that were of most importance to interviewees.

General South-South cooperation questions

- How would you describe South-South cooperation?
 - Which countries have the highest profile as engaging in South-South cooperation?
 - What sorts of projects do you think of?
- South-South cooperation has been portrayed as different to traditional foreign aid. Do you agree?
 - In what ways is it different? In what ways is it the same?
- How has [country being represented by the interviewee] been involved in South-South cooperation in Latin America and beyond?
 - Do the relationships seem different or similar to those with Northern countries?

Brazil questions

- Brazil has been engaging in South-South cooperation for a number of years. How would you describe Brazil's development assistance to the region and to the South?

- Is there anything special or unique about how Brazil engages in South-South cooperation?
- Why do you think Brazil began to engage in South-South cooperation at the time it did?
 - How related do you think Brazil's development assistance is to its domestic development goals and agenda?
 - What do you believe is the future of Brazilian South-South cooperation?
- What do you think Brazil hopes to gain from engaging in South-South cooperation?

Venezuela questions

- How would you describe Venezuela's development assistance to the region and to the South?
 - Is there anything special or unique about Venezuelan South-South cooperation?
- What do you think Venezuela hopes to gain from engaging in South-South cooperation?
- Why do you think Venezuela began to engage in South-South cooperation when it did?
- What do you think is the future of Venezuelan South-South cooperation?

Comparison question

- Which country do you believe has been most successful in its engagement in South-South cooperation – Brazil or Venezuela?
 - On a project level, domestic level or international level?

Regional questions

- Latin America has a variety of different regional organisations. What role do these organisations play in South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean?
 - Would you classify any of these organisations as South-South cooperation?

Appendix 2B: Caribbean stakeholder interview – sample questions

The Caribbean stakeholder interviews were designed to be more specific and in-depth than the observer interviews. As such, the questions were tailored to the knowledge and experience of the interviewee in order to not only understand their perspective but also to gain more information about the SSC projects being undertaken. For example, those involved with a specific Brazilian project were asked detailed questions about the project as well as their thoughts on how it portrayed SSC principles; likewise with those involved in specific Venezuelan/ALBA/PetroCaribe projects. The questions below were therefore a list of possible starting questions that were used as a guide to drafting each specific interview schedule. All interviews included variations of the questions concerning SSC principles.

NB: This list includes sample questions in the Grenada context; similar questions were asked in relation to St Lucia. Interviews with Caribbean generalists also followed a similar pattern but referred more broadly to the region.

General South-South cooperation questions

- What does South-South Cooperation mean for the Caribbean as a whole and for Grenada?
- How much of a stake does South-South cooperation have in development assistance/cooperation in Grenada (as compared to Northern assistance, or private investment)?
- How is South-South cooperation conducted in the region – is it more bilateral or through the regional organisations?
- What role do regional organisations play in South-South cooperation, e.g. OECS, CARICOM, CELAC?
- How do the relationships within South-South cooperation differ from traditional North-South relations – in practice, relations, understanding, expectations etc?
- Have these new South-South cooperation relationships altered North-South relations, or traditional development assistance?
- How is South-South cooperation policy made – is it domestic policy or regional? Is there official and structured policy or is it more *ad hoc*?

Questions concerning Venezuela relations

- Why did Grenada choose to join PetroCaribe and then to join ALBA?
- At the time of joining, was there any expectation of following or supporting Venezuela's leftist ideology?
- What benefits has Grenada received as a result of this relationship?
- There have been a number of cooperation programmes between Venezuela and Grenada – e.g. the ALBA missions, [give other examples from media] – can you tell me how these came about? Would you consider these a success?

- Why do you believe Venezuela has been concerned about Caribbean development and has gone to such lengths to assist? Is there expectation of getting something back?
- What is the current state of Grenada's relationship with Venezuela? Is there concern about the future considering the economic problems facing the country?

Questions concerning Brazil relations

- How has Grenada cooperated with Brazil?
- There are a few specific cooperation programmes between Brazil and Grenada – agricultural assistance, health cooperation – how did these come about? Would you consider these a success?
- Why has Brazil shown more interest in the Caribbean over the past decade or so? How does it benefit Brazil to be more involved in the region and provide assistance? Are there expectations of support in international organisations or other exchanges?
- What does Grenada have to gain by forming a relationship with Brazil?

Questions concerning the SSC principles

- A foundation of South-South cooperation is the idea of solidarity between the countries of the South – where does this solidarity come from? How does this solidarity manifest itself? Is there a difference between the solidarity that Venezuela offers versus that of Brazil? Can there be solidarity between Northern and Southern nations?
- Another idea within South-South cooperation is that of mutual benefit/exchange – in the case of Brazil and Venezuela assisting small countries in the Caribbean, what are the benefits they acquire?
- South-South cooperation promotes the idea of partnership between the two countries – does this partnership seem more pronounced with Southern countries like Brazil and Venezuela than with Northern countries like the US?
- Is there a greater respect for sovereignty in South-South cooperation than in Northern-led cooperation? In what ways does this notion of sovereignty play out in the practicalities of South-South cooperation programmes?

APPENDIX 3

SAMPLE INTERVIEWS

Appendix 3A: International observer interview – Int.#10.I-Dip

Interviewer (BT): How would you describe South-South cooperation? What do you think of when you think of that term?

Interviewee (I): Well, it is not what I think I guess, it's what we use it for and it's the engagement in different objectives by countries that are considered to be South, South not geographically understood, but economically.

BT: So it's any cooperation between two southern countries, it's that specific?

I: Yes Southern, again not geographically but more economically or developmental.

BT: Okay, so it is more the development side of things rather than, would you say, trade or economic relations?

I: What I mean is that the country needs to be a developing country.

BT: Okay.

I: Okay, in that sense cooperation can encompass whatever the countries want to put into the rest of you, right. We can see from transfer of technology, where we have been trying in particular in Guatemala to do with the agro industry. Guatemalan agro industry is quite advanced and quite developed so we are trying to export that to other Southern countries, particularly for Africa. We are trying to do something in that sense, help them make their industries more efficient and that would be a very clear example for us of South-South cooperation but it could go from education to, I don't know, in gender gap, you can mention whatever you want.

BT: Which countries in Africa?

I: Well, the countries in Africa that used to produce sugar, that is Equatorial Guinea, I would say that was the latest attempt. We also do some stuff with South Africa, we are trying to do something for Nigeria as well, Ghana is one on the list. There are a lot of African countries that produce sugar and they want to be better, some others are really, really good. For example, Swaziland has the highest efficiency rate in the sugar industry, which is quite impressive but then there are others, others like Equatorial Guinea that have completely lost their industry out of lack of investment and lack of innovation.

BT: And because Guatemala has those skills, that is why you're in partnership with them?

I: This is something we can export, yes.

BT: How does that operate? Equatorial Guinea comes to Guatemala and asks for assistance, is that how the relationship begins?

I: Usually this comes up in fora that does not necessarily have to do with sugar, like more agro industry or whatever else. You know, the engagement of countries does not necessarily go by an agenda, we try to make it look very organised and very systematic but it is not usually the case. So, like, sometimes you just have bilateral meetings either at diplomatic levels or ministerial levels or heads of government, or by chance. Like, for example, you run into each other in a general assembly or you programme a visit and then there is of course an agenda. But these things usually come up through general conversation rather than a specific event.

For example, when we started talking with Equatorial Guinea about this possibility there were two factors that impacted this. Ambassador Jose Orive who is a Guatemala citizen, got elected to be the Executive Director of the International Sugar Organization, that is the first thing. Second, that same year the World Sugar Summit was going to be held in Guatemala and my head of mission got appointed as Ambassador Concurrent of Equatorial Guinea. So these three things just happened to be at the same time and we had the sugar basically on the tip of our tongue and this just started flowing as a topic. Then we found out that Equatorial Guinea's sugar industry, which is really growing so well, this is something we could help particularly because it has an impact both at the governmental level and private level. Sugar industry in Guatemala is in private hands and so this is good for the economy for both economies. It is good at the political level because it shows good will and it produces good will as well, and it strengthens the bond between the two countries without needing to triangle that relationship through an international organisation or a more developed country basically.

BT: Speaking of triangular cooperation, do you mean that Guatemala prefers these bilateral transactions rather than triangular?

I: It really depends on the subject matter that we are talking about. For example, our idea with the International Maritime Organization, which is here in London, we cooperate triangularly through the IMO with certain countries, particular southern countries, South American countries, Chile, Argentina, we have a couple of MOUs to get some cooperation but it is all done through the IMO because of the validation these projects get and also because sometimes there is also equity from the IMO or any other agency that comes and complements what the cooperating country does for the receiving country.

Sometimes there is added expertise, so some of the staff of the organisation participate on the organisation of the technical mission or they participate as an expert as well. So that really depends on the subject matter. In that specific case it was about search and rescue at sea, so this is a very, very technical matter, more governmental level matter and this is something that goes beyond Guatemala's national interest – we're talking about saving lives at sea and it could be any one's life, it is not Guatemalan citizens or Chilean or Argentinean, so this is more service to the global community.

BT: South-South cooperation is being portrayed as different to traditional aid or traditional development assistance, do you agree and in what way is it different?

I: I would say yes, out of the fact that traditional cooperation usually involves a stronger party, one of the two parties should be stronger in general, not in a particular topic – like we are talking big countries helping small countries or developed countries helping developing countries. In the case of South-South cooperation it is usually two developing countries cooperating with each other because they have strength in one of the areas where they really want to have this mutual understanding of each other.

As I said, cooperation can go in subjects as broad as culture, education or something as specific as what we were mentioning, like maritime affairs, agro industry, scientific industry whatever. So it is different in the sense that developed countries usually have a more clear agenda of what they want to obtain from that cooperation. In our case there is a lot of good will involved even if that sounds a little bit naïve, but there usually still is some sort of that element and there is also pride in both of this, you know – like even if I am a small country I can help someone else, someone in my same condition or someone that I think is little bit worse than I am, something like that. So that also adds an extra element, right, it is an element of solidarity that with the big countries is, well, it could be like a parent but you are always in doubt about it. What are the motives and what are the ends of this cooperation? And usually that cooperation is conditional, like you never get aid nowadays or cooperation from one of the developed countries if it is not under certain conditions. While South-South cooperation is more open and is usually unconditional. So, like, you have some gift you give it, you put it on the table as small as it may be and you just go forward with it. So we really do not condition other countries. And then again bigger countries have means to get those conditions fulfilled, smaller countries not necessarily. So, like, why would you put a condition that you cannot really enforce? That is the question, right. South-South cooperation, I think, has that difference with traditional bigger country–smaller country cooperation

BT: I want to ask more about this idea of solidarity because it is an abstract idea in a lot of ways. Where do you think this solidarity is coming from with Southern countries?

I: Solidarity for me, I'm not an expert, but it comes, it is a sociological category, like you use it just to make it clear that you feel part of a group and not of another one and then you stick to that group instead of trying to pretend to be part of another group or trying to reach another group. Solidarity then for me, it's a question about identity and that identity comes from recognising ourselves in our own conditions. Like, it would be funny to say, for example, for Guatemala to consider itself a candidate for the OECD list or to bid to participate within, I don't know, G8, G20, right, so we place ourselves for example, in the group of 77 non-aligned movement which are not geographically bound in groups or organisations. That is a very raw example if you want to say so of solidarity. You acknowledge yourself that you are either something together or you are at least not part of something else. That pushes you together and you find yourselves surrounded by people or countries in this case that think alike. You acknowledge your own conditions and then you want to do something about those conditions without requesting it from the bigger countries

BT: So are you saying then that this identity of the South is partly a result of being shut out of... ?

I: I never said that, I said on the contrary, because I believe that, as I said it would be very naïve of our countries to pretend to be something that we are not because we have to deal

with certain problems. Although there is also poverty in the US and there are certain people living off food stamps, you have the same in Australia, for some reason that has a bigger or a smaller impact in some countries. In our case, we have a very, very big line of poverty and that has a big impact on our economy and our social standards of living which does not reflect necessarily the same way in Australia or the US or somewhere else.

So I think it is something of a self-acknowledgement, it is not like you're being shut out of something. No one has told us you can never be a part of the G8 or even you should not be in the G20, and they are not, like, don't come to our level. Come on, like you can do those things because no one is going to say no, but the thing is that for your own means what can you achieve being a part of an organisation where you don't really belong because you acknowledge your own conditions and your problems are very different?

BT: Okay, so you mean that commonality of the problems is where solidarity can... ?

I: I believe so, you identify and you see yourself reflected in others.

BT: What role does South-South cooperation – in the more organised fashion that it's become in the last 10 or 15 years or so – what role does that play in fostering this solidarity?

I: Well, interestingly enough, besides the non-aligned movement of the 77 group which is not 77 anymore, there are very few instances where geographically separated countries from the south really participate together and achieve something. You would be surprised but until a couple of years ago and still, again my own example, Guatemala did not have or has not established diplomatic relations with many countries in Africa, which is really strange because it is an exchange of letters or handshake, a picture and you sign something together, two ministers, you see them all the time in New York and Geneva, like Vienna. But there is still this, or there used to be, this distance that is only, how to say, explained by a question of priorities I would say.

So, for example, Guatemala has an obvious need to relate to Mexico, right, which is a huge country. But it could absorb Guatemala very easily, on economical terms, military terms and social terms, whatever you want to call it. But our mandate is more, because we have two constitutional mandates when it comes to foreign policy. The first priority is Central America because we used to be the same country and we should maintain that and there is even constitutional norms that, if any of those countries' citizens wants to be in Guatemala it is very easy for them – they just say, I want to be Guatemalan and they get to preserve the other nationality as well. The second mandate that we have is that we need to foster relationships with countries in our own economical, social, cultural circumstances and this is in our Constitution.

So under those two mandates we prioritise our foreign policy. Obviously on top of that comes your economic interests, which apparently is the main brand of diplomacy that we do today, commercial diplomacy and the UK is a clear example of that. You are here like Hammond and before him Hague speaking basically the same, yeah, diplomacy and then the commerce, economy, so there is clearly more space for traditional diplomacy if you would see it like that. I would say that for those reasons many of the countries feel the same, like Africa has a very effective dialogue system between themselves, you can even divide if

you want to talk about South, West and East Africa and they have integrated in such a way, but still they talk among themselves, right. But Africa talking to Latin America or Asia talking to Africa or to Latin America has not always happened, right. Like for different reasons, ideological reasons about these countries at some point communist, Latin America has in the past tried to stay away from communism because of influence of the US. Now this is very different because of the new brand of socialism, whatever you want to call it.

But yeah, those ties were very tenuous or non-existent, nowadays I think there is a bigger interest, possibly because of the need to find new markets. First economic, second there is the obligation, the intent of complying with certain global goals that the UN is imposing or just repeating from someone else. And that obliges you somehow to see how other people are solving the same problems that you have. Obviously say, Guatemala, we have very little to learn by looking into like Germany's problems but we could learn something, for example, from Ethiopia or, I don't know, even from Nigeria which is a huge economy, but in social terms they have such a huge problem of poverty and underdevelopment. So we could learn a lot of things from them.

I guess every country wants to be better. That would be a lie if someone tells you we are not interested, we are in a perfect condition and that applies to the UK, that applies to France, that applies to Russia, that applies to the US, it applies to everyone. So wherever you can pick up a lesson and apply it to your own, why not? And then again like everyone is always expecting to get something out of it, right. So if through South-South cooperation we can bring something good to yourself, why not?

BT: Just looking to the region then. Can you give me any examples of how Guatemala has been involved in South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean or which countries do you tend to... ?

I: Sure, very recently we engaged in a very fruitful relationship with Trinidad and Tobago. Despite being quite close, they are a Caribbean country, we're not a Caribbean... well, we have a Caribbean coast so we are part of the Caribbean. We have a, how to say, asymmetrical capabilities and that gives us a lot of new ways to interact and cooperate because we can offer different things to each other. Trinidad and Tobago is not a particularly... in terms of ideology... despite the fact being a stone throw away from Venezuela, but again they also have natural resources like gas, like oil. They are a small island nation so they have very particular needs and in many ways we can engage in those things with them. A lot of the private capital in Guatemala has also been engaging with Trinidad and Tobago, hospitality industry, hotels, resorts, even sugar mills and drinks producing facilities, like Guatemalan capital owns the Pepsico bottling company in Trinidad and Tobago and this happens in the Caribbean a lot.

Nowadays we're investing capital in the region so that's something new. It depends on how broad you want to make the term cooperation. For example, again, going back to the maritime issue, right now we are trying to guide El Salvador on how to train seafarers. They are very, very beginner's steps because we have been doing it for longer than they have and our capabilities are so similar that is very easy for them to copy our model. In that sense under the SICA system there are so many instances of cooperation. When I used to be the legal manager of a port authority in Guatemala I used to deliver regularly courses to people

in the port industry all over the Central America region. I also used to travel to Honduras, to El Salvador, to Nicaragua, to Panama, to Costa Rica, Dominican Republic delivering courses and, again, I was not a specialist coming from abroad but it was someone from our own group – because of different information, opportunities and development of that particular industry in our country, it was easier for us to give something to the large neighborhood, but that is sustained through the SICA framework.

In that sense we have the political, economical, the social pillars if you want to call it so and then within those we have the themed areas, like ports, criminal policy, drugs, health, customs union. And in the sense we have the same customs rule – the tariffs are equal in all Central America. We are suppressing border crossings with Honduras so there is no customs between Honduras and Guatemala, you name it.

BT: What role do these regional organisations play? You talked about SICA, in South-South Cooperation, is it a facilitating role? Is it South-South cooperation?

I: Well, we would like to call it an integration mechanism.

Actually the Central American integration process is even older than the EU. Some of our institutions inspired something like the European Court of Justice. The first regional court was the Central American Court. For different reasons, a lot of them external, this mechanism has not been working as fast as possible. I think the biggest mistake was to focus first on the political part instead of focusing on the economic part, which I think the EU did right. They started with economic and they left the political for later stages. The role of such organisations or arrangements – because not all of them have like a formal secretariat or bureaucratic arrangement – is to keep the goals there, even if you change them at some point of time, there is a bureaucrat with a mandate that will be knocking on doors every now and then, to remind the higher instances that they need to do this, and this, and this. Then there is a general agenda they will pursue and that keeps the goals alive, shall I say.

The problem with our countries is that we improvise a lot and we are always like fire-fighters – there's a fire here, we need to put it out. So it is difficult to work on the important things, we are always working on the urgent matters not important things, and they are not the same. With these organisations we try to keep the important things at least on top of the desk, you know. If we don't get there first thing that's fine but at least the objectives are there. There is an agenda that we need to pursue and like with peer pressure somehow countries make an effort.

BT: Okay, I want to ask about Brazil now. They've been engaging in South-South cooperation for number of years. How would you describe the way Brazil does South-South cooperation?

I: Brazil does a very similar cooperation as big countries do.

BT: Yes, you mentioned this idea of “big countries”...

I: Because Brazil has such aspirations – and I think those are justified by the size of its economy and the development that they have managed to get in that sense – they have a well developed manufacturing capacity, which is not equal to any other country in Latin

America, Mexico might be the second but quite far behind. So I understand that Brazil again acknowledges itself as a regional power, despite the fact that it's not "hard power", like how you would say, like more "soft power", like we look up to Brazil for many things. But you don't necessarily fear Brazil or like maybe Guatemala it's not the case because we don't share borders with them. You have to ask Paraguay and that could be a very different answer given the fact that they lost some territory to Brazil and Argentina – the history of Latin America, right.

I think the cooperation that they give or they engage in is not exactly a first world cooperation towards the South but it has a little bit of a difference, in the sense that they do think that through cooperation they can achieve their goals to become a regional power, which in fact they might be because of the size of the economy again, but in others not necessarily – like Brazil is not, for example, the usual bargainer if there is a difficulty in South America. First of all because they are isolated by language and culture like yes, they are still similar but not quite the same. You know, right, the rest of us were Spanish colonies, they were from Portuguese. They kept the language, the rest of us speak Spanish, so there is always a little bit of that difference right, and also the demographics are quite different. They have a stronger influx from Africa which the rest of Latin America does not necessarily share. And there are some other elements, like German and even Japanese immigration have made Brazil's demographic quite different than the rest of the Latin American countries.

They have rarely been too political. With Lula it was a little bit different to be frank, but before Lula and after Lula, I don't see Brazil being quite, not belligerent, but more visible like in political terms in trying to provoke things. They have always been this more soft power role than stronger approach, I would say.

BT: Do you think they are quite strategic then?

I: I guess they are trying to but they have too many internal problems to deal with before they can really worry about their role in the world, at least their role in the region. I think they are still like a kid that grew up too fast and now he doesn't fit in his own clothes, but he still wants to be like the bad kid, no not the bad kid but the bigger kid, the stronger kid in the neighbourhood. Yeah, but they're still wearing their children's clothes, it is a tricky situation for Brazil. We do have to deal with them in many aspects and the problem I would say specifically with Guatemala and Brazil is that, what Brazil offers not in size but in quality right, is not that different from Guatemala.

So, for example, our two most important commodities that we export are sugar and coffee and Brazil is the largest producer of sugar in the world, like 43% of the sugar that is traded in the world comes from Brazil and then coffee is very much the same situation, right. A small country like Guatemala and small like when compared to the rest of the world, we are the fourth largest exporter of sugar but still very, very far behind Brazil and then 10th or 9th largest exporter of coffee. So we sit on the table with them in the sense that we are still with the big guys, right, like in terms of exporting countries, but those organisations or those rules have changed a lot from the past. We had quotas so we had to engage more in that sense, nowadays it is a free market so you sell as much as you want. But we do have common problems and both international organisation, sugar organisation, coffee

organisation foster a lot of cooperation. In this sense, we do have a lot of cooperation with Brazil in terms of coffee and sugar and in general with all soft commodities.

We look to Brazil for cheaper solutions, if you want to say that. Brazil can offer, for example, in the airspace industry, right, they produce planes Embraer, the military branch of them also produces planes. We were about to buy some of their planes, we've been buying radars from there, so military, transport wise as well. Even with the oil and gas industry, we do export oil, so like Brazil has lot of expertise, and Mexico is close so we might relate more to Mexico or Venezuela. So yes, we have a lot of bilateral links with Brazil but again we do not see Brazil as an influence,

BT: So what's the value of having Brazil and their resources? You mentioned things like military, things like planes, things that the US can provide. What's the benefit of being able to get that from Brazil?

I: First of all it is cheaper; and second, it comes with less conditions.

BT: So it's practical?

I: With the US, it is very complicated to get military cooperation for Guatemala due to some sort of embargo that Congress of the US put on top of Guatemala in the 1970s due to the internal conflict, which is funny, right, because it was a proxy war between them and the USSR but that is another topic. And so for us to get military equipment – I am talking most of that equipment is for basically humanitarian purposes – something as simple as getting a helicopter from the US is impossible. And when they give you one, it is on a lease and you need to pay for the maintenance and you need to buy all the equipment from them and then you need to pay all their experts to be in Guatemala to have like two year holidays in Guatemala basically because they just provide their maintenance to, you know, whatever. So with Brazil, those purchases or those elements of cooperation come with less conditions.

BT: Why do you think Brazil started to engage in South-South cooperation at the time it did?

I: And when that would be?

BT: I would say early 2000s.

I: And the President was?

BT: Lula.

I: Okay.

BT: So you think Lula was... ?

I: Yes, I think Lula wanted to further Brazil's influence. He was lucky enough to have a very strong Brazilian economy at that moment which is not the case right now. So that is also easier to export your model and your ideology and validate your own political efforts because then towards the inside, the domestic, public will think, "Oh, yeah, Brazil is so

important now and it is participating in the big fora". It was a strong economy and ideological link as well.

BT: And what do you think Brazil has to gain? Or what is Brazil gaining from doing this?

I: Influence. Which is what any other country is trying to do.

BT: Influence in the form of?

I: Policies, economy, prestige...

BT: In terms of formal support, is there is an element of support for Brazil in the UN?

I: By formal support, what do you mean by that?

BT: I guess, does it come with the expectation that if there is cooperation between countries and this influence is perceived, does this influence come out in the form of... ?

I: Well, we try to stay loyal to our friends if you want to call it. And of course, if we have very close ties with a particular group of countries – for example, there is a vote in one of the many multilateral organisations – we would try to help the people that we are feeling closer to even if that is not something that we think thoroughly and with this I am biting my tongue, there is a lot of emotional elements in support in international organisations, at least from countries that improvise a lot like Southern countries do.

You would find it astonishing how many things are just decided by whims or personal sympathies, empathies, but again there is also this element of identity, we do relate to our own people so. And then again you also have the regional groups within the UN system, a lot of these positions are rotational. Let me give you another, like, very close to me example, again in the maritime industry. Right now we have elections at the IMO, the International Maritime Organization, we elect a council of 40 members. And the region tries to put a certain amount of candidates into this list to get them elected because we cannot all be there first of all, but somehow they should be the spokesperson for these countries for the rest of the region. Brazil is one of them. So we support them to be there. And we vote for them even if there is nothing in exchange, like something concrete and individualised for Guatemala.

In the other organisations in London it is a little bit different. Because we sit with them on the same side of the table because we are producing countries and then you have producing and consuming countries, there is a divide that you will find in those organisations. So there is also an interest that they by defending their own circumstance, like, they will defend ours because it is the same basically.

BT: Okay, moving on to Venezuela. Venezuela began engaging in South-South cooperation at a similar time as Brazil but for different reasons. How would you describe Venezuela's development assistance to the region?

I: Well, in that case it is a little bit different in terms of purposes. Like, of course, both of them wanted influence, both of them wanted the prestige, both of them wanted the

leadership. But in the case of Brazil, I would say ideology played a secondary role; in the case of Venezuela that was the primary goal. You were exporting an ideology, social, political and that was basically because of Chávez. Chávez's vision of what Venezuela had to be and how he wanted the neighbourhood to look.

BT: In terms of how Venezuela does South-South cooperation...

I: They still do?

BT: It depends who you talk to. Venezuela has obviously done it in a unique way, starting things like ALBA and PetroCaribe. Are there things that made Venezuela different in their approach on the practical side of things or is it quite similar to Brazil?

I: There is a huge difference. Venezuela came with a political package, it was not like Brazil that was looking for something more about themselves, Brazil was basically just trying to get the leadership, a prestige for it to show the world how much they have achieved. Venezuela was more about the export of the model and I think you can trace this back to the general way of behaviour, method of socialism – this is a matter that doesn't stay in your country, you need to push it to your neighbours and even far away counter parties.

So with Venezuela the conditions were different in many ways, it was basically to show or to pretend to show the US that it was not the centre of power in the hemisphere. It was a question about rivalry, it was a question about projecting itself as an alternative to the western capitalistic US-led world. So playing with Venezuela as a counter party always came with that liability as well, not only upsetting the US but also having to deal with the ideological part of it. And especially because it was done in a very paternalistic way – by that we are not talking about the protecting father figure. There is more about the imposing part that could seem, for example, how was the grip of Chávez and I don't mean this with any disrespect but the grip that Chávez had over Evo Morales, or at some point which did not last for long but with Correa as well.

It was more like, okay, I will tell you what to do, and I will do. And even in public, like there are several televised programmes where Chávez is belittling Evo Morales, and basically saying, "Oh Evo, you could not deal with this, so I came and I send you 10 helicopters and we finally dealt with the problem". This is on national television. Evo was just nodding like. So, I think Chávez was a remarkable man, that doesn't mean I agree with his ideology because I could not be farther than that. He was a charismatic leader, not everything that he said was wrong, not everything that he portrayed was a lie.

Yeah, but I think that a country should be free to choose, if you engage with them again they should do this in a respectful way and in equal terms if you want to call it that, because in the end we are all sovereign countries. And no one should be imposing or meddling with your internal affairs. That is what happens with the traditional cooperation, North-South cooperation, they come and they impose conditions on you, and then to see the same model in South-South cooperation it is disturbing. I would say so both PetroCaribe and ALBA came with that part, like that very heavy dose of ideology and I can say some... like in some departments... because it was also the stroke of a man's hand away from happening

or not happening right, it was a very autocratic model I would say. And it was not something that could rely on its own institutions. It depended on the person.

BT: Did that make it unpredictable then as well?

I: Yes.

BT: You talked about the need to export this model and that was why this is being done. Why the need to do that?

I: Again it is to gain influence and to validate your own model. Like, why does the EU cooperate with other integration models in the world? Because that basically tells the world that the EU has right to do this or that. Different, for example from the Commonwealth, like the Commonwealth is not really interested in exploiting the model because we believe that they are very unique and then, I guess, they involve conditions that cannot be replicated, and the figure of the Queen and this and that. But in the case of the EU supporting, fostering a similar arrangement basically validates that all, and also allows them to do experiments, you know.

BT: Okay.

I: Yes, you can test, try stuff, like, without doing any yourself.

BT: You think that was the case?

I: No, in the case of Venezuela, what I meant is, like, it is again validation that the model was the right one, it was not about experiment or experimenting. It is basically expanding your area of influence obviously. If you are a decidedly socialistic country, how much influence will you gain with your very capitalistic neighbour? Which is the clash that they have with Columbia, right. Brazil has been a little bit more nuanced because Brazil has a social angle in their capitalism, right, but again because of their social conditions. So, as I said, it is basically to say yes, we are the right wing of this and...

BT: And because they were more radical on the spectrum do you think that is why they were more heavy handed perhaps or more... ?

I: More belligerent, I would say, yes more active, more vocal, not necessarily aggressive in the sense that they were like being pushy like, "come with us, come with us or we are not going to talk to you", not like that but yes they are vocal about it.

BT: Can you tell me more about how Guatemala was involved in PetroCaribe and why?

I: It was basically a... first of all, which year was this, 2000... ?

BT: The dates that I found were 2008 to 2013.

I: So at that moment of time, Guatemala went through a very left wing government, like just the government of the UNE, yes, the more left wing government that Guatemala had sat in ever, I would say, since the 50s and 60s. So that came with obviously particular interest of people and the organisation, I mean the party, right. Many of the members of the

government in that moment were members of the guerillas that fought the civil war in Guatemala, which were basically communist ideas trying to topple the US sponsored government, mainly faced by military people, right, like the visible face of the government was military rulers.

So ideologically the government in that moment was too close to Nicaragua and Venezuela and Cuba. Many of them were formed in Cuba, Cuba was the doorway for all the support for the guerilla troops to Guatemala, like either came from USSR or China but mainly from the USSR, they all that came through Cuba to sponsoring that war by the USSR came through Cuba. And being a Chávez admirer, Fidel, and following Fidel in many ways. It was very easy to see the connections.

The difference between Cuba and this one of course was the size of their cheque book. Cuba sends thousands of doctors to Guatemala to provide medical assistance to very impoverished areas. Of course what they gain from that is that we pay the doctors a certain amount of money and that lights up their burden in their own budget. But then they also generate good will, they promote their image, they export their image and their social model again because they provide free education, free health care, but like they need to see how they live. I guess so it's something different right.

That was the particular circumstances that were in place when Guatemala decided to go into PetroCaribe. Second thing, Guatemala is heavily dependent on imports of fuels. Despite the fact that we are an oil producing country, we do not really consume our own production, it all goes away. And that has an impact on everything, like you add two cents of a dollar to the gallon, the liter whatever of fuel, like something as socially needed and with such a social impact that buying bread goes up by the same amount, why because they say well now we have a bigger cost of transportation and then like our heaters work with oil so like...

So the fuel prices in Guatemala can spark off a big problem for any government. In that sense when you have a guy that speaks the way you used to read in the books that he liked and he was promoting the ideas that you fought yourself for and then he is offering you cheap oil which will make your population happy and then help everybody stays in power and, like, especially the one that you wanted to succeed you was your wife, it is very easy to see why you got involved in this. But then again by norm the president conducts the foreign relations of our country, so it was a choice that he could make despite the fact that most of the population was not happy about this and there was a lot of opposition to that.

BT: So it was quite an ideological choice and a personal choice?

I: Yes, with the added value that it gave you a very populist solution to a social need, which is cheap fuel, like cheap oil.

BT: What was the result of that?

I: Nothing.

BT: Nothing came from it? So Guatemala never actually was a member of PetroCaribe?

I: As far as I remember we were in the impasse of becoming members and then for some reason they didn't, I might be wrong. Maybe we never finalised the process and then we left, might be the case. As far as I remember that's the case, we never really fully became a member of PetroCaribe.

BT: And then did Guatemala receive any oil or engage in trade with Venezuela in regards to fuel and oil?

I: Not really, I don't believe that. In any case, oil is not in the hands of the government, again it's the question of private supply. But if you assure your internal market that you can buy this fuel at a cheaper rate, they cannot justify to keep high prices up.

BT: So it never really... ?

I: I don't know, I guess it works easier when it's a gift, like Chávez was with Cuba in particular or Venezuela right, like you were basically giving away the oil, that's another element of aid more than cooperation, like non-refundable aid or whatever you want to call it. But when it was a market transaction, it all depends on the market right. Like all of a sudden Nigerian oil might be cheaper than the Venezuelan oil and it all depends, if it goes down to the price of transportation, like transporting from Venezuela to Guatemala might not be cheaper just because it's closer than transporting it from anywhere else in the world.

And then we have Mexico that shares borders with Guatemala, why would you get Venezuelan oil instead of just importing Mexican?

BT: Okay. So in 2013, when it seems that any kind of discussion had come to an end, was that to do with change of government in Guatemala?

I: I would say so, yes. In 2012 we had a right-wing government...

BT: So the ideological links were broken... ?

I: The president was an ex-military general, so despite the fact that there is an alleged friendship between him and Chávez, very close, apparently they were classmates at some sort of college somewhere in the world before Venezuela turned left. So they had a personal friendship but the internal pressure was on him and like in any case I don't remember that there were any benefits.

BT: What do you think the future now holds for Venezuela? We've talked about Chávez and it was quite a personal mission...

I: Yes, the problem is that Chávez didn't manage to secure an able successor, Maduro is not Chávez and he will never be, and he is an easier target for the enemies of that model than Chávez was, first I think. Second, Maduro is not as smart as Chávez and third is the economic crisis – external factors in Venezuela will eventually topple the government I am sure. I don't know how soon but it will happen, like Venezuela right now is in a deep crisis despite the fact that they blame a lot of this on media and how media portray the situation in Venezuela. Like my own sources tell me that it is very much in a crisis.

BT: If a new government does come in, do you think Venezuela engaging in South-South cooperation is likely to continue or will it change?

I: The question that I need to ask you again is, are they really doing any cooperation right now because as far as I know like their cheque book ran out of cheques. And whatever they were doing is very limited right now, they are in huge crisis themselves so exporting the model is not the priority right now. I don't know, like you see Iran getting on better terms with the US and it used to be a very close ally of Venezuela, used to visit Venezuela, Chávez used to go to Iran, they are both oil producing countries, you know Venezuela is very quickly getting isolated.

BT: So do you think then it's tied quite closely to economic conditions?

I: 100%, because if you want to engage in cooperation you need the means to cooperate, especially if you are the one who is trying to give – Venezuela was not receiving, Venezuela was giving. So if you are in crisis it is very difficult to sustain that.

BT: Okay. So looking at Brazil, do you think their South-South cooperation will continue?

I: So Brazil is a different size of economy than Venezuela, Brazil is not in the same situation. Brazil will continue to be Brazil, it doesn't matter what happens to their currency right now or what happens with the party of Dilma. It really does not depend on that, it's just because of its mere size, sheer size, just like Russia, as long as Russia remains that size it will always be a center of power. The same with Brazil, they will continue to have the same size of arable land, they will continue to produce that amount of sugar, they will continue producing that amount of coffee, and they will continue producing planes, warships, and whatever they produce. They will continue to have as much oil as they have despite the scandals of corruption between Petrobras and it doesn't really matter, like the resources are still there. They might have a pause in being as active as Lula was, like promoting the image and trying to gain the leadership because they need to look towards themselves, the small clothes as I said right. Yeah, eventually they will pick it up from where they left it.

BT: And South-South cooperation in general? Guatemala is cooperating with a number of countries, is this something that once it starts, does it stop or does it keep going?

I: I think that it evolves with the national interests and it also evolves with the relationship that you have with your partners at that point in time. As I mentioned the example of Equatorial Guinea, there is a very particular area that we could have South-South cooperation with them. If that element disappears, I am not sure if the cooperation will remain, at least on that very concrete level. Yes, we can continue supporting each other's goals and multilateral organisations and bilateral sense but not in such a concrete thing as we have, in that sense we will not be seeking for new areas where we can cooperate necessarily, I am not saying it will not happen, I'm saying that it's not necessarily.

I think Guatemala needs to continue South-South cooperation, it needs to look for more options and more opportunities to do this. I think it is important, because there are so many things to gain from that, as I said so many lessons to learn. We might all be developing countries but we have different reasons why we're in that process and we are facing that

process in different ways. So again it is just a sum of our capacities and how we can complement each other.

BT: And then finally how is it affecting North-South cooperation and the traditional ways of cooperating with the North? Do you think South-South cooperation and the differences and the practical ways it is done, is this impacting on North-South cooperation?

I: I think in some ways it makes it easier for the Northern countries or the developed world when this cooperation exists. A very simple example that you might not consider a traditional way of cooperating is peace-corps. In developing countries unless there are hot areas you don't see troops from developed countries, you don't see Australians, you don't see Canadians, you don't see US, and you don't see German troops. You see, for example in Africa, you see Nepalese troops, you see Pakistani troops, you see Guatemalan troops, so in many ways the South-South cooperation eases the burden on them and also limits their liability in many ways, particularly what I mentioned, right, like how many problems the US or the UK have that have spawned from conflict areas where they have troops. Now if you send Pakistan to fight that war instead of fighting it yourself under the hood of the UN, it's much more simple for you. So the military supervisor you may provide, some economic assistance, some equipment but then it is not your people who die there and it is not your reputation that gets damaged, it's not your soldiers that will be tried afterwards. So in many ways South-South cooperation makes it easier for them. But there is also the risk of losing influence. This is also good for developing countries because they will also try to top up their responses, when you need something, they will come up with more money or try to find a new way to engage with you to keep that line of influence as strong and big as possible. So I guess it's a tricky thing. It could help them but it could also limit their power and influence on you, gives you more independence.

BT: In terms of easing that burden, is it the same in terms of development assistance?

I: Depends on the type of cooperation, like decent developmental assistance. I doubt South-South cooperation will ever be about money, for example. No one will come from Africa and give me the \$5 million that the US is putting in a specific area in the country to build two schools – that will not happen. But India might send me materials perhaps, maybe; Mexico might send me building equipment, we do that with Mexico, we share the cost of building bridges between our countries but they do the studies, they do the design, they put the money in and we might put the workers and maybe the heavy engineering sometimes, it's an uneven partnership but it's a partnership that is equally important for both of us to have that bridge. So they are willing to take a bigger burden because they can. Such thing as coming with the pot of money that European countries do and the US does. South-South cooperation I'm not sure that will happen anytime so that assistance will still be needed. Money is still needed, we still need to pay for stuff.

BT: So it is complementary rather than... ?

I: Yes, I would say more than complementary, it's like an added option. It doesn't necessarily complement each other but this is another leg in your four legged table, you might have five legs in that case for more stability but that doesn't mean that you can forget about the other one.

BT: Does it seem like North-South relations are changing as a result? If there is this alternative that has less conditions and it comes in a different guise, is the North starting to change the ways it does development?

I: I'm not sure if all of the North is changing but some of them are changing their approach, I would say. Colonialism is not a myth, obviously we changed from enslaving people in the Congo to get rubber for the Belgian king to economic dependence in many ways, and preferential tariffs, import quotas, so many other things, right. So there is an obvious need of the developed world for the developing world, it's not just the other way around, like it's not just the poor countries needing the bigger countries – if we would shut off their access to our resources, the North will very much fall into crisis. So I think that attitude needs to be adjusted obviously and if anything will make a change it's South-South cooperation. If they see that we can survive by our own means, of course they will have to adjust their attitude in these conditions in order to keep that relationship that they need more than we do open.

Appendix 3B: Caribbean stakeholder interview – Int.#43.Car

Interviewer (BT): What does South-South cooperation mean for small countries like St Lucia and for the OECS?

Interviewee (DJ): Well first of all I think the whole concept of South-South cooperation is something that has been touted for some time. And it is seen as a highly desirable modality of international cooperation. Unfortunately, I do not believe that the reality has lived up to the potential.

There's a lot more room for cooperation South-South. And I think the reason that we've not realised the full promise of it is that people tend to, when they think cooperation they tend to think projects, they tend to think aid. And once they think aid they think in monetary terms, mainly monetary terms. So as a result of that obviously the countries of the South have severe limitations of various kinds. And so we miss the opportunity to think out of the box and see in what ways South-South cooperation should not be conceptualising the traditional paradigm of donor aid. It should be seen in a context of genuine cooperation and a more collaborative approach to international development. So there are things that we may have that you may need and vice versa and how can we exchange and build on what we have. In some cases, how do we pool resources to ensure that we are able to address a wider complex of problems or perhaps do more with less?

So that's the general complex. Now it's interesting if you look at – I know you have two specific countries you're looking at – but across the Caribbean as a whole, I would think that perhaps the country that you probably needed to focus most importantly on if you are looking at the South-South cooperation in the context of the Caribbean would be Cuba. Because Cubans have done an extraordinary job in the face of imponderable difficulties, ie the blockade, to really genuinely share their resources and give at a level that far exceeds, if you measure it on a per capita basis or by any other measure, far exceeds the assistance given by much richer and wealthier countries.

BT: Do you think that's because it's focused more on, like you were saying, the knowledge sharing?

I: Well it's not just knowledge sharing, I mean knowledge sharing is a significant component of that, but it's a different mindset in terms of assistance. It's not assistance as in a traditional hand down mentality, it is "what do we have that we can genuinely share?" The Cubans have given assistance to countries in the Caribbean sometimes at the cost of their own sacrifice. I remember in Grenada in the 1980s when Maurice Bishop was building the international airport, the level of Cuban assistance was extraordinary and in fact some of the resources that went into the Grenada International Airport was badly needed in Cuba itself in terms of the upgrade of their own airports and infrastructure. So that's what I'm talking about.

BT: Okay, so in terms of South-South cooperation Cuba has been a stand out?

I: Yeah, it really has been exemplary and it speaks to the different modalities so that Cuba has been able to, especially in terms of education, the number of scholarships, in fact there

is some excellent work done by Professor Ann Hickling she's in one of the Australian universities actually. She's Jamaican but she worked in Grenada during the revolution. And she looked at Cuban cooperation, particularly in education, scholarships, the provision of teachers. In medicine you have again scholarships for capacity building in medicine but also the provision of personnel and so on. And in fact what they've been able to do successfully is that the Cubans have been able to incorporate South-South cooperation into the DNA of their own national priorities and development. By that I mean, for example, I remember Fidel has set the objective of achieving, making Cuba a world medical power. Now I mean that's real soft power and they did achieve it. But part of the process of achieving that was in fact their outreach to countries across the world in providing medical assistance.

So, right, you have in some of their medical institutions in Cuba like Pedro Kouri, for example, a level of expertise in dealing with infectious diseases that is unsurpassed in other institutes in more developed countries that are infinitely better endowed than Pedro Kouri is. But because of the hands on and on the ground experience that has been accumulated and the way they've been able to leverage that knowledge in trying to find cures and develop medicines and, you know, the further training of personnel has made it really good.

BT: Following on from Cuba and what you've said, I'm curious what you think about Venezuela and Brazil. Because what Brazil has contributed or offered other countries hasn't been monetary at this point, it's mostly technical expertise. So for instance in St Lucia it's been cooperation on the school feeding programmes, so experts come over. Do you think then that the failure is that it's not enough or that it hasn't been done effectively?

I: I don't know, this is a question that we ourselves have been grappling with at the OECS. We've had some dialogue with the Brazilian Ambassador, trying to very frankly explore what are the limitations, impediments to deepen that collaboration, and I'm honestly not sure. I'm relatively new in this position, I'm going to enter my second year. And we've been trying in these two years to, at the regional level of the OECS, to shift collaboration with Brazil. Now we've explored some intriguing concepts of what we can do, so Brazil for example has put on the table the idea of providing technical assistance for cluster development. And to help us go through the whole value chain cycle to identify the clusters, to begin to position ourselves so that we can really do this. Now if we are able to do this successfully it's going to be a major contribution to the development agenda of the OECS, a growth and development strategy. Because it means we'll be looking at niche opportunities and leveraging those opportunities to maximum benefit across the entire footprint of the OECS. That is taking some time to fall in place, so I think part of the, and I'm sort of extending it beyond just Brazil but using Brazil as a point of reflection, I think part of the problem with South-South cooperation and its limitations have to do with institutional capacity. So in terms of how fast can you configure and put the necessary arrangements in place, both bureaucratic as well as the real arrangements to make it happen.

I think we tend generally to, in terms of development challenges for developing countries, we tend to too often underplay institutional capacity factors and in some cases you have the political will but you don't necessarily have the efficiency of operation that will ensure that opportunities are seized and rolled out in a timely manner. And I think that has been probably the major issue with Brazil. Unlike Cuba because the Cubans ensure that what they promise they deliver.

BT: So you are talking then about a lack of institutional capacity within Brazil domestically to carry this out?

I: Well both ends, both sides, both sides to be frank because I think from our end that's a battle that we've undertaken. You know it comes down to the old Gandhi thing – "be the change that you want to see". That's been a mantra in my career because I believe for institutions to play the transformational role that people expect them to play, they must themselves be transformed and be fit for progress. So you can't expect a lumbering bureaucracy to deliver efficiently on projects.

BT: A lot of these bigger emerging partners have been trying to funnel resources to creating government ministries that focus more on these sorts of international relations. And Brazil has tried to do that through things like the ABC. Do you think that those attempts haven't been as successful as they could be?

I: Well I don't think they have been because we have not seen the sort of positive change that one anticipates. So there have been limitations there.

BT: I'm interested in this because it does seem as though one of the potential benefits with these ministries is that projects tend to get farmed out to the appropriate ministry rather than going through the central agency, like you would have in the US and Australia, and that seems as though if that's done well it can be more effective...

I: Well you see that's why I'm saying institutional factors are critical because if you have a centralised agency, like CIDA or USAID, and people know you are going through that, that's the doorway through which you walk and it is left to that doorway to work out and iron out whatever the inefficiencies are in the system to ensure that in the interfaces they are able to act in a timely fashion. If one is then shunted through a maze of different ministries for different projects on different portfolios then you can very easily get lost in that maze.

BT: So for a country that's receiving assistance it's more complicated?

I: Yeah, it does tend to complicate it.

BT: Do you think there are benefits in the ways that it has been a bit different? It tends to be more demand driven for example. Is the end goal for Brazil's foreign assistance or Venezuela's foreign assistance or China, do you think it's best that they conform to what USAID does or what AUSAID does – is that the goal or is the hope that it would end up being different or new?

I: Well first of all I don't think there is a prescribed model that it should follow. All I'm saying at this point is that it appears that a decentralised model of cooperation, a centralised model, the experience across the board seems to be in favor of centralised models because it gives you a focal point with whom you relate, usually the fact of a focal point will streamline processes and therefore an ability to move faster and you know who you are dealing with. In the case of the decentralising you can easily get lost in a maze of agencies with different requirements. You deal with one ministry, they deal with things in a particular way. A different ministry in the same government will obviously deal very differently with things.

So that being said, it seems that with South-South cooperation, I think that we have to carefully conceptualise and clarify what is the nature of South-South cooperation and clarify what are the expectations that the respective parties will bring to the table so that we don't see this as being just... It could be a problem of expectations on our part – for example because Brazil is one of the BRICS, it may be that we are seeing Brazil, whether consciously or not consciously, very much as we see Canada or US and therefore we expect them to give aid in the same way that these other countries are giving it. And that may not be their intention, their capability, their desire. So there's need for that discussion and so on. But I'm saying by its very nature South-South cooperation should be different from a traditional development partnership or donor assistance.

BT: How should it be different, specifically?

I: Well I think it should be different in terms of there should be greater reciprocity in the definition of what these opportunities are. I think that's a fundamental difference.

So, for example, I led a mission to Cuba at the end of last year. And most of the time missions to Cuba are about what can Cuba help us with. The difference with this mission was a discussion that – “okay in the last 50 years you've given a lot to the Caribbean and now there are new opportunities for Cuba with the US, is there anything that you need that we have that we can assist with?” And it was very interesting what those conversations led to because there were spaces where we never thought that Cubans would need assistance or that we had anything of value that we could put on the table that we've identified. So we are pursuing some of those things.

One of them I can tell you is a decision that the Cubans took that all their university graduates I think from the end of this year should have a certain degree of functional competence in English. Right, now we are English speaking. So again we have the capability of assisting in whatever small way we can in helping to improve the teaching of English. But that also provides a unique opportunity for a genuinely bilateral thing. And as we send people to help teach English in Cuba they are going to come back more fluent in Spanish, they probably never spoke Spanish before and they will develop a capability in the language.

So that's what I mean about the reciprocity. It's less of a one way giving and receiving. And looking really at how you cooperate at different levels.

The interesting thing about that reciprocity concept too, is that in the traditional or western cooperation arrangements, on the western end there's hardly ever an assumption that we have something to offer. There's always a sort of imperial posture of, you know, we need to help you and these are the ways in which we can help out. Now to be fair, that is also balanced by the fact that we sometimes ourselves approach this more with a posture of bending rather than the posture to cooperate.

BT: Has this topic come up with Brazil, this idea of reciprocity? Because English teaching is a very tangible...

I: Yeah, no it hasn't. It hasn't, now it came up in Cuba not because the Cuban's asked, because we asked. We haven't asked such a question. I'm wondering now why we never

asked. I guess dealing with Spanish speakers, Portuguese is a little more difficult to navigate.

BT: The question arises of why is Brazil interested in these small islands of the Caribbean and particularly over the last 10 years or so, what's your opinion on that?

I: I'm not sure. I think Brazil has its own aspirations to exercise a certain degree of hegemony in the region, it's the largest of the Latin American countries. There was a point where it made remarkable progress in terms of its own national development, it's now part of the BRICS club, new emerging economies on the world stage. So it's trying to carve its own special sphere of influence. And there's no better place to start than your own neighbourhood. So, I wouldn't call it a backyard as other countries may describe it but certainly the neighbourhood, they would see as the first point of influence.

BT: Okay, and how they are cooperating with the OECS?

I: Well the main thing has been the clusters. On a bilateral basis they've done small projects and different initiatives with member states. But at the regional level in terms of the OECS as an economic union, that discussion I told you about is really the beginning of what we hope will be a serious programme of cooperation.

BT: Yeah, okay. This feeds well into the role of the OECS in these types of relationships. So from what you've said there, Brazil mostly deals in bilateral agreements and then there are projects for regional development, is that how it's usually conducted?

I: Yeah. I'll give you a copy of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre and that guides what we do. And as you'll see, we are mandated by the revised treaty too, to play a lead role in helping to converge policy in certain spheres, one of which is foreign affairs. Although the treaty empowers us in that way it's a delicate balancing thing because you need to respect the individual sovereignty of the member states. And even if there has been some ceding of the sovereignty in some respects in the Revised Treaty of Basseterre, we do need to respect that countries may have sometimes separate or divergent agendas. And our approach in this in the OECS is to find ways of always shaping unity even in the face of difference. So that we need to recognise that for particular reasons country A may want to take a particular position in relation to an issue of cooperation, different from perhaps the other nine member states or five independent member states, and so we have to respect that. But can we then shape a framework of collaboration that embraces that peculiarity so that everyone is able to realise their aspirations within that framework.

BT: Okay. So we've talked about Brazil, are there any other sovereign countries that are offering assistance through the OECS?

I: What has happened, and not just in Latin America but most countries, you have bilateral accreditation, but then you also have in some cases regional accreditation to the OECS.

So the ambassador of Brazil for example to St Lucia, St Vincent, St Kitts etc, also has presented accreditation papers to the OECS. And we encourage countries to do that because what it enables us to do is to have discussions with them in areas where they may find, for example, in a swing through the countries that of the six independent members five

of them or even all six have asked for the same thing in terms of cooperation. Now does an embassy located in St Lucia want to run around six OECS countries pursuing their identical project or would they want to make this one project realising the synergies and the efficiencies of that? So just from the pure perspective of administration and project management we have a focal point for the management of this project that serves all of the OECS and importantly is accountable to all of the member states as well as the cooperation partner. So that is what our advantage is in this process.

Now we are also very clear that we want to be sure that member states see us as a mechanism for efficient delivery of services so that we are not a large bureaucracy that is increasingly abrogating power to itself in the exercise of these things. We are simply a mechanism of real functional cooperation. Our priority in any project we undertake is to de-emphasise consultancy and studies and so on, we want to make sure that projects make a difference as close to the ground as possible in different member states.

BT: Okay. So do you think then that the most effective means, in the OECS specifically because these are smaller nations, is to work together?

I: I think so. Because New Zealand for example has a small project fund of about US\$300,000 that it has given us to administer on their behalf and I think they are quite happy with the result because we agreed on what the objectives of the fund were going to be, what criteria should be applied and so on and we've been working it and providing reports to them and there are also significant opportunities to the ambassadors or some representative to come in to participate in different events.

BT: Okay. This idea of monitoring and reporting is heavily emphasised in North-South relations, do you think that operates in the same way in South-South cooperation?

I: Yeah I think it is, monitoring and evaluation is related to accountability and it doesn't matter what the modality is, I think accountability is important. Because at the end of the day somebody's money is being used, some tax payer from somewhere and we have a sacred responsibility to account for how it's used. And to always ensure even if something may have worked well and the experience has been positive, that is not to say that it could not have had an even greater impact had certain changes been made. So I think it's just not about resting on the laurels of success and say well we've done this initiative and it's been widely successful. We still have a responsibility to interrogate how we did it and what were the results, and ask ourselves for the next round or in future are there lessons from this that would make us do it differently and better.

BT: Okay. And that's been your experience working with countries from the South?

I: Well that's what I think we ought to do.

BT: Okay.

I: No, it doesn't happen always in countries of the South, in fact in some cases none of this happens. But certainly that's the ideal to which we are working hard to establish. So trying to build knowledge management as part of the DNA of the organisation.

BT: Yeah, that does seem to be something that comes along with time. So you think this is something that even if in the past it hasn't been...

I: Yeah, you've got to start somewhere.

And we've started doing that process. To give you a practical example we have a project with USAID on climate change. And one of the initiatives that they undertook is a project with a couple other member states using mango trees to stabilise river banks, because apparently from the scientific work done it was discovered that the mango tree is one of the best forms of local vegetation that can really help to securely hold the river banks, and well it's a mango tree so you get a fruit. But also the mango tree is one of the plants that has the biggest carbon capture potential.

So we did this project, but the objective of the project we undertook was essentially the preservation of river banks for a whole range of reasons related to the dangers of erosion there. But then in the discussions that we've been having trying to dissect the lessons of our different experiences we'll say well look, we played a key role, we are playing a key role in the rehabilitation of the Dominican coast post-Storm Erika. And of course the question of land slippage and erosion has been a major issue there, but if the mango tree has that potential why don't we apply this not just to river banks but across Dominica in certain areas for rehabilitation of the slippage areas. And if we do that it means that we are going to be planting a small mango plantation, are we just going to plant mangoes and leave them there? Or does that also provide us with an opportunity for the beginnings of a niche mango industry? Where rather than just export raw mangoes why not take it one step further up the value chain by way of say doing mango slices, mango puree for export. And if not export to the bigger countries at least export within the Caribbean itself, because I personally bought a packet of mango slices in the supermarket here in St Lucia and it was \$25 and it came from Dur, it was a Dur mango under the brand of Dur. And that came from the US. So we had a \$480 million food import bill in 2013. All of that are tremendous opportunities for not just import substitution but export as well.

BT: Oh yeah. Are you doing much on the coconut front? This is not related.

I: Yeah well there is a lot happening there, people are more and more conscious of the coconut. In fact here in St Lucia there's a young guy, I can't recall his name but he just got the youth entrepreneur of the year award for doing virgin coconut oil and he's doing amazing stuff with it.

BT: Yeah. This is very popular in places like London.

I: So yeah, we have a business development unit based in Dominica. And we are in the process of again restructuring and so on to provide that kind of support more effectively. Especially youth generated businesses.

BT: I feel like this costs a lot of money in London and you should be doing well from it.

I: And you see if we take this on we'd have to ensure that we meet all of the health and vital sanitary standards and so on to allow for exports to lucrative markets like the UK. And then

of course the fact that it is again promoting youth generated businesses, tremendous opportunities. And brand it under fair trade and all that.

BT: Precisely. Okay moving on to Venezuela then. I'm curious what you think about them considering they are quite connected to Cuba but then have gone about their cooperation in specific ways.

I: Venezuela is an interesting thing because Venezuelan cooperation predates the Chávez revolution. And Venezuela because of its oil richness, its oil wealth has been one of the more visible areas of collaboration in Latin America. And over the years we've travelled a long road with Venezuela through its ups and downs. Even in the times of dictatorship, its cycles with democracy and now the socialist experience. Venezuela has been viewed at various times with different levels of suspicion in some quarters in terms of historically in the past because they've been claims made on places like Bird Island and so on.

I think in the early period of Venezuelan outreach to the Caribbean, that is pre-Chávez, the aid programme, the cooperation programme was very tied to Venezuelan's defined self-interests in the Caribbean. With the emergence of Chávez I think there was the emergence of a more idealistic approach to development cooperation. And in fact some of the programmes that have been extended through for example the PetroCaribe thing, I think one can safely admit that had it not been for PetroCaribe many of the economies of the Caribbean would have been in serious crisis. Because in the height of the oil spikes the cost of fuel and oil was just beyond our reach. And what that programme did was give great relief to these economies over a sustained period of time that helped to buffet us from the impact of the global crisis.

Now of course things are becoming more difficult in Venezuela so one has to think carefully what needs to be done. But I think part of that too is the governments of OECS have set up various objectives for themselves in relation to renewable energy and going green and so on. Efforts are being made to accelerate on that front, of substitution of oil to renewables, to go green, so yeah.

BT: In terms of the social projects mostly through ALBA, have they been beneficial to the OECS members?

I: Oh yeah, highly beneficial. You had projects like operation miracle, the eye operation, I don't recall the exact figures. I'm sure you can probably dig them up but a few several thousand persons in the OECS have had their eyesight restored from cataracts being removed and so on in this programme. And, so that has been very positive. There was also an initiative for free exchange of bulbs, electrical bulbs, from incandescent to energy saving, so that was very useful as well. So the ALBA programme has focused a lot on the social sector and particularly on reduction of poverty, initiatives on poverty, areas of poverty concentration.

BT: Have any of these projects gone through the OECS or they've mostly been kept separate?

I: No, most of these have been bilateral. But the regional character of the thing has been from the Venezuelan end.

BT: So the OECS isn't working with ALBA?

I: We work with them but I mean the whole coordination of the whole thing is done from the Venezuelan Capital. The Venezuelan ambassador to different Caribbean, well the one to St Lucia is accredited to the OECS as well.

BT: Okay but they are mainly bilateral relationships rather than through...

I: Mainly bilateral.

BT: Have there been any issues within the OECS due to countries joining PetroCaribe and ALBA?

I: Well politically it's been subject to discussions and debates. There are political forces within the OECS who, I think largely for political reasons, have argued that if the US is not too happy with Venezuela we shouldn't be too cozy with them. But that's a political question and I believe the bottom line of this is not so much the politics but the economic realities.

The Caribbean heads of government after meeting with President Obama last year where they focused on the issue of energy, reportedly President Obama said to them if he was in their position he would have participated in the programme as well because it clearly has been of real benefit to the country.

BT: Do you think those fears of US retribution, do you think they've been founded? For example, St Lucia didn't join until recently and a lot of the reason being given is that they were concerned that the US wouldn't be happy.

I: Yeah but I haven't seen, I'm not aware of any instances of so-called US retribution. It's more perhaps in the minds of some people who don't think that the relationship should be there than the reality of US action.

And the US has proposed other alternatives in terms of energy but I mean every country offers what it is able to offer in terms of what their alternatives are. But as far as I am aware it's never been posited as an either/or situation.

BT: Yeah. Have there been any downsides do you think of these countries joining ALBA and PetroCaribe?

I: ALBA? Well if there is any downside it's more the political debate and argumentation around the identification. But certainly from an economic perspective, and I think ultimately the objective of all of these instruments of functional cooperation are really economic, the impact has been positive.

BT: I want to ask about the principles of South-South cooperation – reciprocity you talked about, also mutual benefit. Another one is this respect for sovereignty – does it feel as

though there is more respect for sovereignty within these South-South relationships versus North-South relationships?

I: Well, there are two things. We need to unpack in the North-South relationships whether there is a power dynamic at play, explicitly at play. That sort of dictates, I mean poses certain directions or expectations and if so that speaks for itself. Or whether there is an implicit dynamic that results from the difference in power between the cooperating parties. So you know either way you're sort of down with North-South cooperation because the reality of North-South cooperation is that it is fundamentally an unequal relationship. There is a more powerful partner, cooperating or assisting, however you care to formulate it, and a less powerful partner. In a South-South relationship, there is more equity of power theoretically in the relationship. Now, of course, that needs to be nuance because even in a South-South relationship, all South is not equal. So Brazil versus the Caribbean is almost like a mini North-South right? But the bottom line whether it's North-South or South-South is really what are the equations of power at work in the dynamic and how are these being negotiated and navigated.

BT: Is there a better start to South-South cooperation because of historical connections or this Southern identity? In North-South relationships like you were saying there is a sense of someone's got more power, whereas it doesn't seem as obvious or as explicit in South-South even in cases where Brazil is massive compared to these Caribbean islands. Do you think because there is some common connection in the South that the starting point is better, would that be correct to say?

I: Yeah, I think that would be correct to say. Because even if we took the case of Brazil, while geographically there's certainly the appearance of a David and Goliath relationship, the reality is that, certainly from our perspective in the Caribbean, when we hear of Brazil, no matter how developed Brazil may be or may be moving ahead people still think of Brazil as third world you know. Because at least up until recently some of our indicators were better than theirs, social indicators were better than theirs. Some of the programmes they've done for example with support to education at a community level, getting kids in schools and the universality of basic education. We were far ahead on these indicators so there wasn't that sense. Although Brazil was massive, there was still a feeling that well there's a level of equality among us, because you may be bigger than me but I am better in some respects. So that has balanced the scales.

BT: Is the solidarity from having similar challenges or similar goals or where does this solidarity come from?

I: The solidarity is multi-layered. A lot of South-South cooperation starts with political notions of solidarity and the desire to strike common cause with likeminded, like structured, smaller, disadvantaged-in-some-way partners. Or even if not that impulse, certainly an impulse to say let us have a more differentiated basket of partnerships so that all of our cooperation eggs are not in one basket and therefore keeping us in a dependent relationship especially in the context of a non-equal power relation.

So the South-South cooperation is from a political perspective largely driven by the desire that if the countries of the South exchange more and so on then the historical traditions and

patterns of trade and all of that are balanced out by the countries that have been at the receiving end working among themselves. So that's what gives rise to the political solidarity.

BT: Do you think that could ever change as countries become more developed?

I: Well the harsh reality of international cooperation is that at the end of the day every country seeks its self-interest. So even when the power countries come together, it does not say that there are not contradictions among them. But their coming together is to give them greater strength against a bigger force that they have to contend with. And if that bigger force was to be removed, then contradictions among themselves may become more exacerbated because then we no longer are fighting a common enemy. So now we have to compete among ourselves.

BT: Is that a benefit for the OECS countries? Does it give the OECS more weight if they are friends with Brazil?

I: I think for the OECS as a whole, the general posture is one of friendship to all countries. Because we have a wide... I mean for example half of the independent member states of the OECS, three of them to be precise, have relations with Taipei the other half have relations with Beijing. Now that may look like a fragmentation to some people but first we keep asking what are the opportunities in this? Because the modalities of cooperation with these two parties are very different. Taiwan's assistance tends to emphasise small community projects. The modality of delivery is different. They would provide the funds to make the projects happen in country so you employ local labour. The cash goes through the local economy. Chinese assistance generally tends to be the provision of usually a big massive project because, I suppose, because of the scale and size of China they think in big terms. So that's a fundamental difference. In terms of the diplomatic alignments, you can see the results of that comparing the member states and the impact of Chinese, whatever the nature of that Chinese assistance is. And these are some of the discussions we've been having internally, are there opportunities in there to encourage Beijing and Taipei to talk together in relation to the OECS? We are below the radar of the rest of the world, geopolitically relatively insignificant in that power play. So is there room for cooperation rather than competition? Complementarily, these things need to be considered.

BT: How does that work within the OECS, the fact that some of the member states have relations with Beijing and others with Taipei? Can the OECS work with China, work with Beijing or because of those divisions no?

I: No, neither of them is accredited to us.

BT: So that's all mostly bilateral?

I: So it's bilateral. But it's good in a sense that neither of them is accredited and because the contradiction is not of our making, it's their contradiction. There's that notion of the one China policy which means if we receive diplomatic credentials from one it is at the expense of the other. So for us as an organisation, a regional construct, it is best to stay out of that, but then have the capability of talking to all sides. So we informally talk to all sides. I mean at the time of hurricane Erica I was able to approach the Ambassador of Taiwan in St Lucia

and make a plea for humanitarian assistance for Dominica and I think the Taiwanese gave US\$200,000 I believe, as assistance to Dominica. But Dominica's diplomatic relations is with the People's Republic.

BT: Have the different ways that South-South cooperation has been working impacted on traditional North-South relations do you think?

I: It has in limited ways but I think there's potential for it to impact in much greater ways. When you think, for example, you see the North-South cooperation remember does not exist in isolation, it's tied to historical relations, our past histories and associations, and because of that our mode of insertion in the global economy. So when you look for example at our relations with the UK, with the US, I mean it's no accident that most of our trade, most of our airline links, the draw of our tourism sector all leads back, it follows the same trail. So it's the same money trail.

On the other hand if we look at the potential of South-South cooperation, there's a lot of empty space that has not been explored. I mean Senegal is directly across the globe as the crow flies from any of the OECS countries, across the Atlantic. To get to Senegal you have to fly to London, you have to do the ironically the slave triangle to get there. You fly from London to, from the Caribbean to London, London to Africa and to get back the same way, okay. Now what prevents us from having direct air links to Africa? It has been raised from time to time but and for various reasons it has not happened. And I think a large reason is economic. If we open up air links what is the trade that will be in the flow? Some people have argued if you build it, it will happen – if you build it they will come. But then before they come, you will lose a lot of money. Maybe it requires a simultaneous exploration of trade opportunities and then put in place a shipping arrangement that will correspond to that.

But there are huge opportunities and you see to the extent that we engage more in South-South cooperation you really create an economic basis for true sovereignty because then you reduce your dependence and you're being locked into the economic hegemony of any North-South construct.

BT: Do you think North-South relations can change in this area? Or is the history too powerful to fully overcome and create that greater sense of partnership that South-South has?

I: No, I think it can change, because to me the nearest, perhaps the most exemplary, real example I can point to of that would be Canada, because Canadian aid has historically not been anything near an imposing construct. The conditionalities of Canadian aid have been very different from the rest. And Canada has invested significantly in the Caribbean over the past years.

I used to sit on the board of directors of CUSO which was like the Canadian equivalent of the Peace Corp in the late 1980s and I can tell you that there is no Canadian I have met, ever in any significant position in the industry or government who has not been a CUSO participant and it shows in the national psyche in terms of understanding of development issues in the third world, their empathy with the issues, the positions that Canada took and that was up until the emergence of the conservative government in Canada. Now that

Trudeau is in we see a return of that spirit of understanding and less of a business mentality, aid for trade and that sort of thing.

BT: Last question then in terms of the future of international relations, will South-South continue to grow and possibly eclipse North-South or do you think the regional connections are what's going to be the next big thing or what do you think?


I: It's a very dynamic world and there are factors beyond just cooperation. The security concerns of ISIS and the emergence of this will define the political dynamic, I think it's going to be a most telling influence on what happens. But if we look at just cooperation in it's own silo I think that the opportunity is there for increasing South-South cooperation, especially as some of the emerging economies and as Africa in particular gets its act together because while the general complexion of Africa in the western media has been still largely negative, there's a lot of positive indications of economic growth in many of the African countries, strengthened in democratic procedures. You look at President Kagame from Rwanda, you look at the recovery of countries like Rwanda... a lot of reason for hope. The new president in Tanzania and what he's doing walking the talk. You know all of that really encourages us that an outreach now on a South-South basis could yield great benefits. And at the OECS we are looking to see what sort of strategic partnerships we could forge.

BT: Yeah, is that looking promising?

I: We are hoping, we are just at the beginning of that process.

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY	
Informed Consent Form Institute of the Americas dissertation research	
<p>Project Title: South-South Cooperation in Latin America in the 21st century: More of the same or something new? Presentation and perceptions of Brazil and Venezuela's assistance programs to the region</p>	
<p>Researcher: Bethany Tasker</p>	
Participant's Statement	
<p>I agree that:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in this study.• I understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw immediately.• I understand that my participation will be voice recorded and I consent to use of this material as part of the project.	
<p>Identification in final report: <i>(please tick appropriate box)</i></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree that my name, job title and place of work may be identified in the final report, and waive the right to anonymity for the purposes of this research.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree that anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications.</p>	
<p>Signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT Tel: +44 (0)20 7679 2000 email@ucl.ac.uk www.ucl.ac.uk</p>	

APPENDIX 5

VENEZUELAN-FUNDED PROJECTS IN GRENADA

St George's Market Redevelopment Project



Photo credit: B. Tasker, 29/3/16.

Tanteen Pavilion Renovation



Photo credit: B. Tasker, 29/3/16.

APPENDIX 6

VENEZUELA–GRENADA COOPERATION

St George's hospital project



Photo credit: B. Tasker, 18/4/16.

APPENDIX 7

VENEZUELA–ST LUCIA COOPERATION

ALBA Bridge in Grande Riviere, Dennery

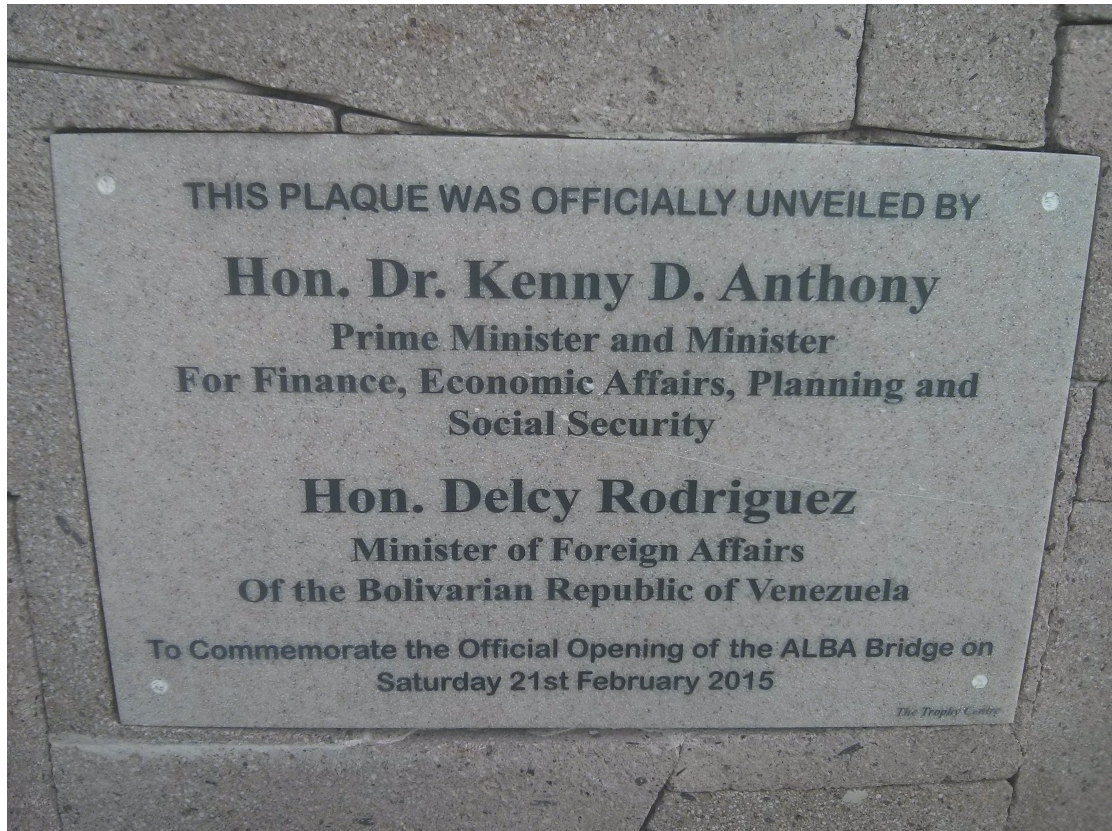


Photo credit: B. Tasker, 18/3/16.

